

A SHORT
DISCOURSE
Upon the Doctrine of our
Baptismal Covenant,
BEING AN
EXPOSITION

Upon the Preliminary
Questions and Answers
OF OUR

CHURCH-CATECHISM.

Proper to be read by all Young Persons,
in order to their Understanding the
whole Frame and Tenor of the Christi-
an Religion, and to their being duly
prepared for CONFIRMATION.

WITH
DEVOTIONS Preparatory to that
Apostolick and Useful Ordinance.

By *THOMAS BRAT*, D.D.

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TO
His Highness
THE
DUKE
OF
Gloucester.

S I R,
THE vast and univer-
fal Influence which
the Vertues of Princes
have upon the rest of Man-
A 2 kind,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

kind, makes it the concern of this whole Nation, that Your Highness be thoroughly Instructed in the Principles of our most Holy Religion, whose whole Tendency is to make both Princes, and their People Happy. And when we consider that Hopeful *Genius*, which does already appear in Your Highness; and the very surprising Account you can give of Your Faith, at so tender an Age, we may thence promise our selves, by the Blessing of God, a
Hap.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Happy Change in the Generation of Youth, now growing up; to Retrieve whom to more sober Principles than have been found in their Predecessors, all possible Application must be us'd, or the Nation will be Undone; and to Influence to which, nothing will more Contribute, than Your Highnesses Pious Example.

Now, that little Piece which does here presume to wait upon Your Highness, is an Explication of

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Your Baptismal Vow and Covenant; and this design'd to prepare You for that solemn Recognition of it, which ere long we hope to see You make at Your CONFIRMATION. And as that Sacred, and Apostolick Ordinance is singularly Useful and Necessary, especially where Persons have been Baptiz'd in their Infancy; so there is no part of Christian Institution so immediately fitted to prepare you for it, as that which gives you to understand

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stand the general Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the same Covenant, as shews you what Obligations lye upon You to be faithful in it, and teaches You how to form steady Resolutions to perform Your part of it. And that Almighty God may make Your Highness a Resolute Christian Hero, an utter Enemy to Prophaneness, Vice, and Wickedness; and may always enable You to Repel the strong Efforts of Your Spiritual Enemies, which will

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do all that's possible to shake
your Constancy, shall be
the most hearty Prayers of

S I R,

Your Highness's

Most Obedient, and

most Humble Servant,

Thomas Bray.

THE
P R E F A C E.

AS the Instruction of Youth in the Principles of Christianity is of Infinite consequence to their own private Happiness, and the Publick Welfare both of Church and State; so there is nothing more incumbent upon Parents of Children, and Masters of Families, than to take care that both be thoroughly season'd with Religion. But as to Parents and Masters, I shall perhaps take some other such occasion to declare what is their Duty in this matter. The Persons I shall here make bold to address my self to, are those of my own Function, to whom I crave leave to offer, with all Deference and Submission, what Method, in my Opinion, we had best to take, in order to instil into the Minds of Youth, a due understanding of the Principles of Christianity.

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And in order to that, I humbly conceive there may be a double Course of Catechetical Instruction, which it would be requisite all Youth should be oblig'd to go through.

The *First* is that usual and common Method in Publick Catechising, wherein they render an account of their Religion to the Minister of the Parish, in the Words of the Church-Catechism; and are usually requir'd to prove each Point by Texts of Scripture; for which purpose Bishop *William's*, or Dr. *Isbam's* Exposition with Scripture-Proofs, are of excellent use: And those Persons can never answer it to God, and the Souls of their Children, Apprentices, and Servants, who do not encourage, and oblige them constantly to attend this Method of Instruction, and that till they are at least Ten or Twelve Years of Age.

Secondly, But after this, I think it would be of mighty Consequence, if all the Youth of the Nation were put upon another course of Catechetical Instruction, suitable to more grown Years; and that is, to read some larger Expositions and Discourses upon the same Catechetical Points. And if moreover the Youth of every Parish from the Age of 12, to 15 or 20, would every *Sunday*, after

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after the Congregation is dismiss'd, come to the Minister of the Parish in the Vestry, or the Chancel of the Church, and there render him an account of what they have read, and prepare themselves to answer his Examinations upon the Points which they have been reading the Week, or Lord's Day preceding, I do not know what would tend more to their Edification than this. It would lay a sort of Obligation upon them to read considerable Proportions ever *Sunday* at least, and so would inure them to a right spending of that Day. It would be a means to fix their Attention in their Reading. It would give each Minister an opportunity to acquaint himself with the Proficiency of the Youth of his Parish in Knowledge and Virtue; and according as he finds them Proficients in both, he might invite them to an early Engagement of themselves to God, first in **Confirmation**, and afterwards at the Sacrament of the **Lord's Supper**. And *Lastly*, It would wonderfully endear the Minister and his People to each other, than which, nothing will be more for their Benefit and his Comfort.

It is sad to see how universally backward our Youth are, when grown up, to come to be Catechis'd, as if it were too Childish
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an Institution, and below them to be seen at. The Consequence of which is, that they never become sufficiently grounded in Christianity; and are let loose to follow their own vicious Inclinations, without the restraint of Christian Principles, when the Efforts of corrupt Nature are most strong and boisterous within them, and when evil Company do most haunt them. But since it is so, that persuade them what we can, they will scarcely be brought to submit themselves to the ordinary Catechising amongst Children, it will be necessary that we provide for their safety by some other Method. And this more Manly way of Instruction here propos'd, being more adapted to their Age, and being a kind of *Conference* with them, I dare say it would be very taking with all of them. And they would become thereby so thoroughly season'd, and perfect-ed in Religious Principles, that there would be little Danger of their Miscarriage ever after.

And this way of putting them to frame Answers themselves, out of what they shall read, will, I conceive, be much more **Easy** and **Profitable**, than to oblige them to get the Answers by heart, which are formed for them by others. **More Easy**, for not one in

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a hundred has Leisure or Memory sufficient to get any thing considerable without book; which is the reason so few can be brought to make any use of those many Expositions which have been made by way of *Question* and *Answer*: whereas once or twice reading a short Discourse with attention; will enable any Youth of tolerable Apprehensions, to offer at so much towards an Answer, as to satisfy the Catechist that he understands what he has read.

And **More Profitable** this Method will appear to be, because it puts the **Catechumen** upon forming a Judgment himself upon what he reads; whereas the bare repeating of an Answer made to his hands, will render him little wiser than the *Parrot*, which is taught to utter words she understands not.

And then if moreover after this we shall our selves deliver to them an Exposition more expatiated, and large upon the Point on which they have been reading before, but to the very same purpose, only more copiously explaining the Doctrine, this will yet let a clearer Light into their Understandings of those Divine Truths. And by this way of giving them *Line upon Line*, and *Precept upon Precept*, they will at length arrive to a full Comprehension of those sacred

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cred Truths ; upon the understanding the Importance of which, their Salvation does so much depend.

But besides the Advantages in this Method of infusing Christian Knowledge into the Minds of Youth, to a degree, as would render them, I am persuaded, much above the Attainments of many who are advanced far beyond them in Years. A Minister by having gain'd to this purpose a Select Society of the Youth of his Parish, giving themselves up to the more close Instructions of him their proper Pastor ; he would hereby have a fair opportunity given him to instruct them also in the Use and Reason of all the Parts and Devotions in their *Common Prayers* ; Than which, I do not know any part of Instructions more wanted at this day amongst the Common People.

For why ? Of all the Parts of Religion, there is none does so immediately and directly point towards God as Publick Worship, and in the due performance of which, the Glory of God is so much concern'd. This is that Homage the Creature pays to his Creator. And when it is solemnly, and awfully perform'd, God is glorified in the eyes of Men ; than which, what can be more reasonable and necessary ? But now if we
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cast our eyes upon the Sottish, Stupid, and Unconcern'd Behaviour of the greatest part of People in *Countrey Congregations*, they do not only most shamefully sit down all the time of Prayer, but for any appearance of Devotion we can perceive, are as little concern'd at the Divine Offices then perform'd, as the Stones they tread on, to the exceeding great Offence and Disturbance of all Pious and Devout Minds. But this scandalous Blemish in Publick Assemblies, I can speak it by Experience, would be soon remov'd, should every Minister have a choice Society of Twenty or Thirty young Disciples in, his Parish well Instructed, as in the Principles of Christianity, so in the use of their *Common-Prayer-Book*, for this *little Leaven would soon season the whole Lump*. And the whole Congregation would be so far reduc'd by the Solemnity and Regularity of those Persons Devotions, as at leastwise not to affront God as they do, in the Service they pretend to pay him; but would indeed be quickned by that Life there is in our Offices, when the *Responses* are solemnly and universally made by the People, so as they would begin to feel some Sparks of Devotion glowing in their own Breasts, derived
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from the neighbouring Flame so ardently burning in the Hearts of others. And indeed the Minister who shall be able to form out of the Youth of his Parish, such a Society as we are now speaking of, need never want Company at a Monthly, or at more frequent Sacraments. He would have a number of excellent Spirits dispers'd amongst the several Families of his Parish, by whom he might easily revive Family-Devotion, so universally and shamefully now neglected and disus'd, these being as it were his *Lay-Chaplains*, to perform that part of Religion therein, according to his Directions. Not to say, that so many serious Persons being so sensibly Benefited by his Instructions, and the pains he has taken with them, will be upon all occasions his Advocates against the Obloquies and Detractions of those, who are always upon the wicked Topick of Reviling the Clergy for their Office-sake.

And now give me leave to apply my self more particularly to you, my Learned Brethren, who have the Government of Schools. And in the

First place, I desire you would please to consider, that the very Original, and Chief Design of Schools within the Christian

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stian Pale, is to instruct Youth in the Principles of Christianity, and to imbue them with Humane Literature, in order only, and in subserviency to that end; according to which Original Institution, one of the great Schools in our Native Country does still bear in the Frontispiece of its Buildings.

Schola Catechizationis in Religione Christiana.

And pursuant to the same Design of their Foundation, the 29th Canon does strictly enjoin all School-Masters to Catechise their Scholars.

Secondly, It may be in no Case more proper to know your own Power than in this; and that, as it is absolutely in a manner in your own Breasts to appoint what Books your Scholars must have; so there is scarcely that Parent so bad himself, who will not be very well pleas'd his Child should be princip'd in Religion, as well as Learning; and who will not thank the School-Master, who puts him upon buying a *Catechetical Exposition* wherein to instruct him.

And Lastly, Whereas there never was so great a growth of *Deism*, and Infidelity as now, it may be worthy your Reflection,

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whether to have the Youth of the most sprightly Parts instructed in no other Theology than what they learn from the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, may not have a dangerous Tendency to such Curst Opinions, and to a disrelish of Christian Doctrines.

All which consider'd, I could wish that every one of your most useful Profession would please to make it a main part of his Care, throughly to principle his Scholars in the Doctrines of the Christian Religion, by a weekly Catechising of them; I say, in the *Doctrines of Christianity*; for all Moral Duties are so much the Dictates of Natural Reason, that half the Pains is not necessary to make Men understand *Christian Ethicks*, as *Christian Principles*; which being many of them so much above Humane Reason, they must be often inculcated, ere they can be duly apprehended. And besides, till these Principles, which are the grand Motives, and most forcible Reasons to a Holy Life, have obtain'd their due force in our Minds, by being competently understood and believed, Morality will advance but poorly, as the Watch moves slowly whose Spring is weak.

And why, I would fain know, should not Parents think it as material a part of the
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the School-masters Duty to give the Youth committed to his Charge, a through and perfect Understanding of the Elements of Christianity, as of *Grammar*. Both their own, and the Publick Happiness, I am sure, depends infinitely more on the one, than the other. I know, indeed, in such a Laborious Employment as a School-masters is, the whole Week round, he can find but little Leisure to compose Discourses, and Explications of his own, to give them upon those Heads; and therefore, till some better shall be provided, for the purpose, I do humbly offer the following Exposition, divided into *Lectures*; one of which, if all the Youth in Schools were enjoind to read every *Sunday*, and an Account were demanded of them concerning what they have so read, every *Monday* Morning, as duly as they are made to say a part in their *Grammar*, I hope it would tend something to their Edification; and, moreover, would have this good Effect, that it would provide a proper Employment for the School-Boys on the *Lord's Day*, and would inure them to such a religious way of spending it, as will influence their Lives ever after.

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And indeed, upon the whole, tho' none others of our Youth, besides those in School, could be brought under such a *Catechetical Instruction*; yet hence we may reasonably hope for a much better Generation of Men the next Age, than we have the Comfort to see at present, because the greatest, or, at least, the most considerable part of Youth, in all Christian Nations, do pass into the World through the Door of School-Discipline.

But if both *Parochial Ministers*, and *School-Masters* shall unanimously join, first in Training up the Youth under their respective Charges in the Principles of Christianity, and shall then take the next opportunity of an *Episcopal Visitation*, to bring them to be *Confirm'd*: This timely Instruction, and this early and solemn Engagement to God of Persons in their Youth; of Persons, I say, well instructed in the Nature and Importance of their Baptismal Covenant, will, by the Divine Blessing, secure so considerable a number of Persons of the best Capacities, and Education, to the Service of their Creator; as will in time out-number the Sons of Darkness, and stoutly repel the strong Efforts of Satan's Kingdom.

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And now, I have only a word more to add, and that is, the reason why I propose a Book upon the Subject of our *Baptismal Covenant*, as a most proper Christian Institution for Youth? And I have these Reasons to offer for it.

First, Because I take the Covenant of Grace, or our Baptismal Covenant, to comprise the whole Doctrine of Christianity; even all that, than which no Man as a meer Christian is necessitated to know more, and than which the meanest ought not to know less.

Secondly, But more especially, with relation to Youth, because it is more particularly necessary that all Youth should be instructed in, and comprehend the General Nature, Terms, and Conditions of their Baptismal Covenant before they go to be *Confirmed*; which Apostolical Institution as it is of vast Consequence to have it duly administred; so in a more peeuiliar manner it is requisite that all our School-Youth, when they are come to Years of Discretion, and just before they are entring into the World, should both recognize the Covenant they made with God, and receive the *Episcopal Benediction*: To do both which rightly and duly, what more requisite, than

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than that they should be instructed in the Covenant which they are to *Confirm* accordingly.

It may seem indeed that the Matter treated of in a Discourse of this Nature, may be above the Capacities of Youth. And I would fain know what *Grammar*, or what Institutions in other Sciences are not so at first. But as often conning of Rules and Terms of Art by Children, lets gradually into their Minds that Knowledge, which will be useful to them all their Lives; So here with a hundredth part less reading over a Book they will become perfect Masters of the whole Scope of these Christian Elements.

I say, of the whole Scope of Christian Elements; for it is not to be expected that a Discourse of this Nature should descend to all the particular, and subdivided Terms of the Covenant, whether Articles necessary to be Believ'd, or Duties to be practis'd. No Elementary Institution of any kind does that. But in a Discourse of the General Doctrines of the Covenant betwixt God and Man, entered into in our Baptism, are laid down those great strokes of Christianity, which are to be fill'd up afterwards by more particular Explications.

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And here the whole Scheme of Saving Truth is to be laid down in an Orderly Method, so that every Hearer of the Word of God, may be able to refer what at any time he shall hear, or read in a desultory manner, to its proper Head ; for want of which Skill, Christianity (though the most Rational System of Verities in the World) seems to many to be a meer huddle of Incoherent Principles and Practices, whose end they know not, nor how wisely every thing therein is adapted to carry on that Noble End.

In short, *First*, I am afraid it is too certain and too known a Truth ; Namely, that scarce any Age heretofore can equal the Impiety of the present. There have been indeed horrid Immoralities known in every Age ; but in this the very Fundamental Principles of all Religion, both Natural and Reveal'd, are attack'd, and overborn by the Confederate-Forces of *Artheists*, *Deists*, and *Socinians*.

Secondly, The great Cause of Looseness in Principles and Manners, is universally acknowledged to have been owing to the want of Catechetical Instructions in Schools, Families, and Churches ; through which neglect, the present Generation of

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Men having been never well grounded in their Religion are become an easie Prey to *Atheists* and *Hereticks*.

Thirdly, The only way therefore to train up a better Generation of Men for the next Age, and thereby to avert the Judgments of Heaven from pouring down upon us, is universally in all Families, Schools, and Churches, to revive that Ancient and Necessary Method of Instruction, *viz.* Catechetical Doctrine.

Fourthly, And I take it, that there is not a more Fundamental part of Catechetical Doctrine, and more principally requisite to have the Minds of all Youth, both in Schools and Families, prepossess'd withal, than that wherein is Delivered, and explain'd, the General Nature of the Covenant of Grace; that Covenant we entred into with God in our Baptism: Because,

First, In this Covenant are included all the Articles between God and Man; and consequently the Summ and Substance of the Christian Religion.

Secondly, Because a general View of the whole Body of Christianity being in a most Natural and Regular Method delivered in the Doctrine of our Baptismal Cove-

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Covenant ; those who shall be so instructed, will be able to refer to their proper Heads every Discourse they shall hereafter read, or hear, on any particular point, to the avoiding of Confusion in their Apprehensions of Divine Truths.

Thirdly, And by this means, seeing at once the Noble End of Christianity, and with what infinite Wisdom all the Parts of it are adapted thereunto, they will be able, without farther reading, to discern the *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*, to the preventing of all Infusions of *Atheism* and *Deism*. And,

Lastly, The general Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, will be also of singular Advantage to all Novices ; especially at this time, to be prepossess'd withal ; as it is an excellent Antidote against the two prevailing Heresies of this Age, *Socinianism* on the one hand, and *Antinomianism* on the other ; the one the Heresie of the Higher, the other of the more Vulgar sort of Men : A true State of the Covenant of Grace being alone sufficient to obviate, or overthrow, and that without disputing, the wretched Principles of both.

It is requisite indeed our Youth should not stop in the general Knowledge of the
Nature,

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Nature, Terms, and Conditions of their Baptismal Covenant, but that they should proceed hereafter to a more thorough Understanding of each particular Article both of Faith and Practice: But regularly they ought first to know the general Scheme of Christianity, and the Knowledge of this may be sufficient to fit them for *Confirmation*. And their more distinct understanding of each Particular in their Baptismal Covenant, whether Articles necessary to be Believ'd, or Duties to be Practis'd, must be that which shall fit, and qualifie them for the farther Ratification, and frequent renewing of the same Covenant in the *Lord's Supper*. When they shall have first learnt the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, leaving them, they are to go on to *Perfection*.

And now as to the OFFICE FOR YOUTH, added at the latter end, it was for the most part compil'd by Dr *Alexander Noel*, once Dean of St. Paul's, for the Use of Schools; and to make it more generally useful thereunto, I have not only translated it, but added some few Prayers more for the Youth, and Servants of a Family And if due Care shall be taken both in Schools and Families, that all the Youth belonging to each, shall, to Knowledge, add Piety and Devotion, it will turn, no doubt, to a Comfortable Account one day, as to those Pastors who shall thus faithfully inspect their tender Flock; so to those Masters of Schools and Families, who shall take care thus to train up the Youth belonging to their Charges respectively, in the Knowledge and Fear of God.

TO THE
READER.

THE Readers for whom I design this short Discourse upon the Doctrine of our Baptismal Covenant, are principally you who are the Youth of the Church of England. And because the first Questions and Answers of the Church-Catechism do instruct you, in as few words as possible, in all the Articles both on God's part and ours, contain'd in this Covenant, as also in other Points necessary for you to be taught, pertaining to that great Subject; I have therefore chose these Preliminary Questions and Answers to be the Text to enlarge upon, in the Explication of this Important Doctrine.

And the reason why I do so particularly pitch upon the Doctrine of the Baptismal Cove-

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Covenant, as the most necessary for you to be thoroughly Instructed in, is for these two Reasons. In the first place, because being Instructed in this, you will know the Summ and Substance of Christianity, even of all that most admirable Religion, in the Study of which it concerns you to bestow a great part of your Time, and clearly and distinctly to understand the Nature and Design of which Christianity, you can never arrive, without comprehending in the first place, the general Doctrine of your Baptismal Covenant. And, Secondly, I do more particularly recommend this Subject to your Study, because a due understanding of your Baptismal Covenant is a necessary Qualification to Confirmation.

Such is the Paternal and Affectionate Care of the Church of Christ, towards all her Sons and Daughters, that you were scarce sooner born into the World, than you were took into her Bosom; and being Baptized, were delivered by her into the Hands, not only of your Parents, but of your God-fathers and God-mothers, as Sureties (so much concern'd I say she is for your welfare) that you shou'd be train'd up in the Knowledge of that Covenant, and those great Engagements you then enter'd into with God. And when you shall be so

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Instructed, she requires you should personally appear before the Chief Officer in the Church of Christ, and He your Spiritual Father, the **Bishop**, and there solemnly profess it is your stedfast and unfeigned Resolution, by the Assistance of God, which you will always pray for, to discharge such your Covenant: And the Episcopal Benediction will be then given you, by which, and the Reverend Fathers laying on of Hands, you have a Promise that the Grace of God shall be conveyed to you.

But then it will be requisite you should come duly prepar'd with a due understanding of the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the same Covenant you appear to ratifie in your own Person, in so solemn a manner. And that you may be so prepar'd with a competent Knowledge of what you do, is the design of the following Discourse.

And here let me advise you always to bear, even to the end of your Lives, a profound Regard to all the positive Institutions of our Saviour and his Apostles. There is not a piece of Pride more fatal to the Souls of Men, than to think themselves above Ordinances; nor is there any more provoking to God than this is, because it implies as if we were wiser than our Master, and knew better than he, by what Means and Methods
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the Graces of his Holy Spirit should be convey'd unto us. And indeed, considering we are so much Influenc'd by our Senses, so that visible Appearances do mightily Affect us, there is not any thing more naturally tends to make all considering Persons faithful in their Covenant than this, that they do with such outward Solemnities, first enter into it by Baptism, and afterwards Ratify it in Confirmation, and the Lord's Supper. And moreover we may with the utmost Assurance depend upon it, that Christ will be ever present in his own Ordinances, so that they shall never fail in those blessed Influences he designs them for, and has promis'd by them.

*As then you have given up your selves to the Service of Christ in your Baptism, having then solemnly Renounc'd his Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; So be not backward, so soon as you shall arrive to a competent Understanding of the Tenour and Force of that Engagement, to reinforce the same Dedication of your selves to God at Confirmation, embracing, for that purpose, the first Opportunity of the Bishop's Arrival into your Neighbourhood. And soon after this, having improv'd your Understanding in Divine Things, the better to fix your Holy Resolutions, and to draw down from
Heaven*

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Heaven more plentiful Measures of his Holy Spirit, to enable you to perform the same, let no opportunity of the Holy Sacrament ever miss you, though it should be Weekly or Daily Administer'd. For this you may ever take for a sure Rule, that the more you draw nigh to God, and the more closely you engage your selves to him, the nearer he will vouchsafe to draw nigh to you, and the more you will have your Interest confirm'd in him.

But since Youth are so inconsiderate of themselves, as not to prize these Advantages as they ought, I must not pass by you who are their Parents, without a Word or two of Admonition. And to quicken you in your Duty of making it your chief Care to have your Children duly princip'l'd in Christianity, give me leave to tell you, that the very Jews will rise in Judgment against you on this very Account; for they are so diligent in the Instruction of their Children in their Law, that There is no Youth under Heaven can at Thirteen Tears old give so exact an Account of the Rites of their Religion, as the Jewish. And they think themselves chargable with all their Childrens Miscarriages till they have so instructed 'em, and have at Thirteen brought 'em before the Synagogue,

Addison of the
Present State
of the Jews,
Ch. 10.

To the Reader.

to profess the taking the charge of the Law upon themselves, which is answerable to our Confirmation.

Nor let any think to excuse themselves from this Care by the meanness of their Condition. The Vaudois, as Thuanus represents their State, seem to be the poorest, and the most destitute People upon Earth, and yet there is not any amongst 'em but can read their Bible, and sing their Psalms. And there is not a Child to be found who cannot very readily, when ask'd, give an account of his Faith, and a reason of the hope that is in him. Both which Instances consider'd, I think it deserves your serious Reflection, whether your so far despising the Advantages of so excellent a Religion as you enjoy, as not to think it worth your while to teach it your Children; And whether your slighting such excellent means of Instruction as your Children may have, above those of other Nations, may not provoke God to remove his Candlestick from you, and so give it to a People worthier than your selves.

Thuan Hist.
Lib. 27.

THE I. L E C T U R E.

A Catechism; that is to say. An Instruction to be learned of every Person, before he be brought to be Confirmed by the Bishop.

THE Word *Catechise*, which is often to be met with in the *Greek* of the New Testament, does import a general Instruction in those Christian Truths, which are afterwards to be more particularly and distinctly learn'd by those who have entertain'd the Profession of the Gospel. Some give us its original Meaning by another Word, which signifies to Build, intimating thereby, that a Catechism must consist of the main and fundamental Principles of Christianity, such as are fitted to build up a firm and unshaken Christian withal: And others derive it from the Word *Eccho*, because these Principles must, by often repeating, be infused into us.

And now agreeably to this original Meaning of the Word, *A Catechism may be defin'd to be a General Instruction in the Fundamental Principles of*

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the Christian Religion, necessary to be learn'd of every Person, in order to his Confirmation.

First, It is a General instruction in the Fundamental Principles of Religion. Now the Christian Religion is out of Christian Principles, to live an holy good Life; and together therewith to depend upon Christ's Mediation for us with the Father, that our imperfect Righteousness may be graciously accepted to our Justification.

1. *Morality*, or a good Life, consisting in a conscientious Discharge of our Duty to God, our Neighbour, and our selves, is a most necessary and essential Part of Christianity, as appears from that of St. James, 1. 27. *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Afflictions, and to keep ones self unspotted from the world.* And to implant this Morality amongst Men, was the great Design of our Saviour's Coming into the World. Thus, Titus 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. *The Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation to all Men, hath appeared, teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World; looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of Good Works.*

2. But it is not enough to live virtuously, but withal it must be from *Christian Principles*. They who are temperate only because it preserves their Health, just and charitable in order only to maintain their Reputation and Int'rest in

in the World, and fast and pray only to be seen of Men, *Verily I say unto you, they have their Reward*, Mat. 6. 2.

Nor is it enough to entitle any one to the Name and Reward of a Christian, to live a good Moral Life, as mov'd thereunto by the meer Principles of Natural Religion, as upon the Persuasion there is a God, and Providence, and a future Judgment; but to render any one capable of being justify'd by the Law of grace (and there is no other Law according to which we can be Justify'd) it is necessary we believe and act according to Christian Principles; *for in the Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, it will be according to his Gospel*, Rom. 2. 16. And,

3. When all is done, a Christian's Principle will teach him not to depend upon his own Righteousness, tho' performed according to the Conditions of the Gospel, but to depend solely upon the Mediation of Christ, that his imperfect Righteousness may be accepted; for since we all have sinned, or come short of the Glory, or Approbation, of God, Rom. 3. 23. *It is in Jesus Christ we have Boldness, and Access with Confidence by the Faith of him*, Eph. 3. 12.

And indeed such Dependence upon the Mediation of Christ for our Acceptance, is the distinguishing Character of a true Christian; for though it should be suppos'd that many Pagans, by the Force of the mere Principles of Natural Religion, have led very plausible and blameless Lives; yet that the best of our Performances are so imperfect, that it was thought requisite

in the Divine Wisdom, that the Son of God should become a Sacrifice to expiate their Guilt, and a Mediator with the Father to obtain their Acceptance, is what the proud Hearts of Natural Men never thought of, and no Religion but the Christian, ever taught: And therefore this Dependance upon Christ is necessary to take down that arrogant Conceit of our own Righteousness, which is a Temper of Mind so displeasing to God: So the Apostle, *1 Cor. 1. 29, 30, 31.* *To the end that no Flesh might Glory in God's Presence, Jesus Christ is by him made to us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, that so he that glorieth, may glory in the Lord.* And thus you see what is the Christian Religion.

And now the *Fundamental Doctrines* of this Religion must be such as are the Foundation upon which such a Religion can only be built, or the Spring from whence it can flow; that is, such Doctrines as powerfully tend to render those who do embrace such Principles, in the first Place good Livers; and, next to that, so humble as to depend upon the Mediation of Christ the Son, for their Acceptance with God the Father.

And such is the Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, wherein we learn the Engagement we made at our Baptism to be thus Religious; such also are all the Articles of our Christian Faith, which are every one of them most powerful Motives to a Holy Life; and some of them, moreover, such as send us to Christ to intercede with God for its Acceptance. Such are the *Ten Commandments*, which are the general Rules

Rules out of which, all, or most of those particular Duties wherein consists our Holy Living, do flow. And such, lastly, are the Doctrines of *Prayer*, and the *Sacraments*, which are the Means; the former, the Means of obtaining the Divine Grace and Assistance, without the Help of which we cannot be Religious; the latter, the Means of conveying this Grace to the Souls of Men. And thus you see, as what is meant by the Christian Religion, so what are to be accounted its Fundamental Principles.

And now, *A Catechism is a General Instruction only in these Fundamental Principles.* A Catechism must be a general, short, and comprehensive Instruction in those Necessary and Essential Points of Christianity. Hence *Rom. 6. 17.* It is called a *Form of Doctrine that was delivered to the First Christians.* And such is the Catechism of our Church, which does contain those very Points which are stil'd the *First Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, *Heb. 6. 1.* So that as to the Matter you see of which a Catechism is to consist, it is a General Instruction in the Fundamental, and Necessary Principles of the Christian Religion.

The second Thing mentioned in the Definition of a Catechism, are the Persons who are to be Instructed. *And a Catechism is an Instruction necessary to be learnt of every Person.* No Building can stand without a Foundation: And as to Religion, you will find, *Mat. 7. 24.* a Person well grounded in Religious Principles, shall be able to bear the Shock of the fiercest Temptations; but a Person, whose Religion is founded

upon no Principles, shall not be able to withstand the least: So that there is an apparent necessity, that every Person of what Age, Quality, or Condition soever, should be well-grounded in Religious Principles by *Catechetical Instructions*: And the Contempt of *Catechising*, is ever the Effect of Pride, and the Cause of Ignorance.

True it is, the Seeds of Virtue, and Principles of Religion, can never be too early sown; and therefore 'tis undoubted, that all *Children* especially ought to be *Catechis'd*. But since the Principles of Religion are for the most part deep Mysteries, hard to be understood, the fittest Persons to receive an Exposition of these things, and then to be demanded an Account of what they are so taught, must be Youth grown up to some Years of Discretion; so that it is not below Persons of any Age, or Quality, to lay the Foundation of their Christian Knowledge in Catechetical Instruction.

Thirdly, And now it only remains in order to compleat the Account I have given of a *Catechism*, to declare to you the end of it. *And its Design is to prepare you to be Confirm'd by the Bishop*. Confirmation consists of Two Parts: First, in a Person's solemn renewing of his *Baptismal Vow and Covenant with God*, after that he comes of Years to take upon him thole Vows which where made for him by his Godfathers, and after that he has by *Catechising* been instructed in the Nature, Weight, and Benefit of such a Covenant. And then, secondly, it consists in the *laying on of the Hands of the Bishop*, accompany'd with his *Blessing and Prayers*. And a Rite this is, both greatly
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necessary, and of singular Benefit in the Church of Christ.

And, *First*, It is highly necessary, that every *Baptised* Person, when he comes to Years of Understanding, should solemnly declare his Acceptance of all the Mercies of God, on those Conditions his Sureties have engag'd in his Name; or else he may be reasonably deem'd to have renounc'd that Covenant of Grace, and to have repented it was ever made in his behalf: To have renounced that Blessed Covenant, I say, and all claim to the Priviledges and Promises thereof; which puts us so much above the Condition of Infidels and Heathens, *who are without Christ, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the World*; which the Apostle mentions as a most desperate and forlorn Condition, *Eph. 2. 12.* And *Confirmation* is also highly necessary, as it consists in the Episcopal Benediction, and laying on of Hands. This Rite of laying on of Hands being reckon'd, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* amongst the First Principles of the Doctrine of Christ.

Secondly, And *Confirmation* is also an Ordinance of singular Benefit to Men's Souls, whether, *First*, As the *Solemn Profession* therein made to be true to our Baptismal Covenant, imprints upon our Hearts serious Thoughts, and Religious Purposes, and Resolutions; Or, *Secondly*, As the *Episcopal Benediction, Prayers, and Laying on of Hands*, have Spiritual Blessings attending them: For that much Benefit may be expected from the Devout Prayers, and Paternal Benediction or Blessing of a Father of the

Church, who is Commission'd to pray to God in the behalf of others, and to bless the People in his Name, is what we are assur'd, *Jam. 5. 14.* Nor have we reason to doubt, but that God will have a particular regard to his own Institutions, and will bless those means of conveying his Grace, which he himself has appointed. So that thus you see what it is to be *Confirm'd by the Bishop*; and withal, how necessary and beneficial it is to the Souls of Men to be so *Confirm'd*.

And now, Catechising is highly necessary to prepare Persons to be accordingly *Confirm'd*.

And, *First*, In order to their *Solemn Ratifying their Covenant with God*. For what so requisite as that every Person before he takes upon him so great and weighty a Business, as the performance of the conditions of the Covenant of Grace, should be first Instructed, so as to understand them well; both what those Conditions of Repentance, Faith, and Obedience are; and what mighty Blessings God vouchsafes to make over to him in the same Covenant, which should be a reasonable Consideration to undertake so great a Charge. *What King*, says our Saviour, *Luke 14. 31. going to make war against another King, sitteth not down first, and consulteth, whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?* And in like manner, every one who will act wisely, before he engages in a Spiritual Warfare against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, ought to be instructed in the Nature and Manner of this Warfare. So necessary is Catechising in order to the Renewing and Ratisfying in
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Confirmation, that Covenant and Vow which was made in Baptism.

Nor, *Secondly*, Is it less necessary to the receiving Benefit by the Prayers, the Blessing, and by the Laying on of Hands of the Bishop in Confirmation. For as beneficial as these really are to all those who shall come duly Prepar'd; yet it is certain, that without some necessary Qualifications in such as come to be Confirm'd (amongst which, to understand the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, and seriously to intend to perform the same, are the first and chief) none will be much the better for the Bishop's Prayers, Benediction, and Laying on of Hands. And therefore Catechising, which is the only proper Means to give Persons such an Understanding, must needs be exceedingly necessary to their being Benefited also by what the Bishop shall perform in their Confirmation.

And thus you have had an account, *First*, Of the Matter of which a *Catechism* is to consist: *Secondly*, Of the Persons to be Catechised: And, *Thirdly*, In some measure you have been told the End and Reason of Catechising. But there being several other great Advantages in this Method, of Instruction, I shall defer the Consideration of them to the next opportunity, as farther Motives to you, duly to attend it.

THE

II. L E C T U R E.

A Catechism; that is to say, An **I**nstruction to be learn'd of every Person, before he be brought to be Confirm'd by the Bishop.

YOU have already been told the Nature of a *Catechism*: *First*, That it is a General Instruction in the Fundamental Principles of the Christian Religion. *Secondly*, That the Persons proper to be Catechised, are all New Beginners in the School of Christ, be they of what Age or Quality soever. And, *Lastly*, I have shew'd you, that the end thereof is to fit and prepare Persons for Confirmation, both to Renew their Baptismal Vow before the Bishop, and to Qualifie such as are Confirm'd to receive Benefit by the Bishop's Prayers, Benediction, and Laying on of Hands.

But because there are several other Benefits of Catechising, and those such as will raise a due esteem of it, I will proceed to shew you those other Ends and Purposes to which Catechising serves, before I enter upon Expounding the *Catechism* it self.

II. And as for Confirmation, so *Catechising* is also requisite to fit and prepare Persons to be

Worthy

Worthy Communicants in the Lord's Supper. Both in Confirmation, and in the Lord's Supper, you are to renew the Covenant with God. To both therefore you ought to come with the like Knowledge of what you are to do.

And alas! to what is it but to their having never been Instructed in their *Catechism*, that so many come so Ignorantly, (and if Ignorantly, then Unworthily) or else not at all to the *Lord's Supper*? Ignorantly in not understanding the Importance of that Blessed Sacrament to be the new Covenant in *Christ's Blood*, 1 Cor. II. 25. that is, that it is the Seal of that Covenant which was purchased by, and Ratify'd in his Blood.

And to their not having been Catechis'd, whereby they would have been given to understand the unspeakable Benefit of being in Covenant with God, it is to be imputed, that so many turn their Backs upon, and come not at all to the Lord's Table. To which there needs no greater Motive to Invite any considering Person than this, that God does as well condescend in that Blessed Ordinance to seal to us a Title to the Pardon of Sins, and to Eternal Life and Happiness, as we do Ratifie our Vows of Faith and Obedience unto him.

III. *Catechising is very useful to render you capable to be Edify'd by the Preaching of the Word, and to the Profiting by Sermons.* That is truly Edifying Preaching, which explains the Meaning, and proves the Truth of the Doctrines of Christianity, which states the Nature and Extent of Christian Duties, and which warms the Heart

Heart with a Love of our Duty, and does vigorously excite us to the Practice of it. And whereas an unchatechis'd and ungrounded Person will be sure to prefer the most empty and noisie, to the most substantial Discourses upon the Points of Religion; He who has been truly Catechis'd, will be able to make a better Judgment of what he hears, and will turn it to far better use. And by having a Regular Scheme of Divinity laid up by Catechetical Instruction in his Head and Heart, he will be able to range every thing he shall at any time hear, into its proper Place and Order; as also to distinguish between the more and less material Parts of Christianity.

IV. *Catechising is of Excellent Use to prevent your being seduc'd into Heresie and Errour.* That Heresies will arise in the Church, and that by the Permission of God, for a trial of our steadfastness to the Truth, is what the Apostle does warn us of, 1 Cor. 11. 19. *There must be Heresies, that they who are Approv'd may be made manifest.* But as great as is the Danger, that one who has never been well Catechis'd, will be seduc'd; yet he who shall hold fast that *Form of Sound Words*, 2 Tim. 3. 13. which has been taught in his Catechism, will be able, by them, as by a certain Touchstone, to discover what are True, what are Erroneous Doctrines.

Lastly, *Catechising is exceeding useful to preserve a young Person from falling into any gross and wasting Sin, and especially into any ungodly course of Living: Or if he has been seduc'd by Evil Company, the having the Seed of good Principles sown*

in the Heart, by a timely Catechising, will be the most likely means to recover such a one out of the Snares of the Devil.

First, *It is exceeding useful to preserve Youth from falling into any gross and wasting Sin, and especially any ungodly course of Living.* Thus it was the Counsel of the Wiseman, *Prov. 22. 6. to Train up a Child in the Way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* And the Experience of all Men, and of all Ages shews it, that those are not easily, and but very rarely corrupted, who have had their Minds possess'd betimes with the Apprehensions of God, of his Justice, Goodness, Truth, and Holiness: and who have learn'd what the Son of God has done for them, to rescue them from the Power of the Devil; and who have been made sensible of their Vows and Engagements to God.

Experience, I say, shews us, that Persons thus Princip'l'd betimes, rarely miscarry, whereas our unchatechis'd, untaught Youth, fall immediately, without any restraint, into the most horrid and vile Courses.

It may indeed now and then happen, that a Person well Princip'l'd may be overcome through the Strength of Temptation, but such a one soon recovers again. Or it may sometimes be found, that falling into loose Company, he may become for a time harden'd in Wickedness, and be deliver'd up to follow all Uncleaness with Greediness; but however, this may be ever observ'd, that whereas one who had never receiv'd any Principles of Religion, is scarcely ever after reclaim'd by any Methods
of

of Providence, such as Sickneſs, or other Afflictions, becauſe he is not ſenſible from whom they are ſent, and whither, and to whom they would call him ; yet if one that has been formerly inſtructed in the Neceſſaries to Salvation ſhall happen to be ſo viſited, it is very great odds but his former good Principles reviving in him, do make him ſenſible of his ſoul Rebellion againſt his Gracious Father, ſo that with the Prodigal Son he will reſolve to *ariſe, and go to his Father, and ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, make me as one of thy Hired Servants*, Luke 15. 18, 19. So that in ſhort, by virtue of good Principles early ſown, a young Perſon ſhall be either prevented from falling into a vicious courſe of Life, or ſoon recover'd out of it, which alone were enough to demonſtrate to you the uſe of Catechiſing. And this I am ſure, together with all the forementioned Reaſons for it, ſpeak it to be the moſt neceſſary, as well as it is the moſt wanted Method of Inſtruction at this Day in our Church.

THE

III. LECTURE.

What is your Name? And the Answer is made by the Christian Name.

THo' this Question seems not very material to some, yet a more proper one could not be put at the beginning of a Christian Catechism than this, which obliges you to give up your Christian Name to the Minister, and Congregation: For,

First, *The asking you what is your Christian Name, may put you in mind of your Christian Profession, which you took upon you under that very Name, and of that Strictness of Life, which is required of those who bear the Name of Christians.*

Secondly, *It gives occasion to remind you, that the bad Lives of such who bear the Name of Christians, do an infinite Prejudice and Dishonour to Christianity. And,*

Thirdly, *It gives occasion to the Minister to exhort you therefore to stand upon the Dignity of the Christian Name and Profession, by living such Lives as may be an Honour, not a disgrace unto it.*

And, First, I say, the asking you of your Christian Name may put you in mind of your Christian Profession, which you took upon you under that very
Name,

Name, and of that Strictness of Life which is required of those who bear the Name of Christians.

For why? There is the greatest Force in a *Christian Name* to make a Man lead a Christian Life, as under that Name having listed himself,

1. A Disciple of a most Holy and Excellent Religion. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, or upon whom the Name of Christ is called, depart from Iniquity, 2 Tim. 2. 19. For indeed it is ever expected, that those who profess to be guided by the most perfect Doctrine, should answerably live the most perfect Lives.
2. Every one of you, under your *Christian Name*, have in a Publick and Solemn Manner at your Baptism, listed your selves Servants and Soldiers of a most Holy and Just God: Of a God that hath no Pleasure in Wickedness, neither shall any Evil dwell with him; in whose sight the Foolish shall not stand, and who hateth all the Workers of Iniquity, Psal. 5. 4. 5.
3. It is under your several Christian Names, that you have Listed your selves to fight under God's Banner against his, and your own Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, declaring you will so Renounce every one of them, as not to be tempted, or drawn off by either of 'em to sin against God.
4. Under your respective *Christian Names* you have profess'd firmly such Articles as are the most powerful Motives in the World to deny all Ungodliness, and Worldly Lusts, and to live soberly righteously, and godly in this present World.
5. And accordingly you have engag'd your selves under your several *Christians Names* in the strongest Covenants, in

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hopes of the most Glorious Rewards; and, out of fear of the severest Punishments, to obey the most Righteous Laws of God, by living thus *soberly, righteously, and godly*. And lastly, under this very *Christian Name*, you have received of God most sure Promises of most powerful Assistance to do all this. Thus may the very Asking you what is your *Christian Name*, put you in minds of your Christian Profession, and of the Strictness of Life, which is requir'd of those who bear the Name of Christians.

Secondly, And the same Question and Answer about your Christian Name, gives occasion to remind you, that the bad Lives of such who bear the Name of Christians, do an infinite Prejudice and Dishonour to Christianity. For nothing does more hinder the Conversion of Infidels, than their seeing profess'd Christians live, as if they themselves did not believe the Truth of Christianity. Nor does any thing open the Mouth of the Enemy more against the Blessed Author of our Holy Religion; for *the Name of God is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles, through those who live unanswerably to their Profession, Rom. 2. 24.* But especially it puts bitter Reproaches into the Mouths of Atheists, when Wickedness is committed under the Disguise, and Pretence of Religion; which two Considerations should oblige all who are named Christians, *to see that they walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Eph. 5. 15.*

And indeed since we seldom see a Person of so abject and mean a Spirit, as to endure with Patience, that the Calling or Profession he is

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of, whatever it is, should be set at nought: As therefore you would not shew your selves to have less Honour for your Christian Religion and Profession, than secular Men have for their worldly Callings;

Thirdly, *I must therefore take occasion from the mention of your Christian Name, to exhort you to stand upon the Dignity of your Christian Name and Profession, by living such Lives as may be an Honour, not a Disgrace unto it.* For why? 1. It may be considered, that all Titles of Honour are but mean and inconsiderable, in respect of our Christian Title. 2. There is so near an Alliance between the Christian Name and Profession, that in Baptism they both began together. 3. It deserves to be consider'd how the Primitive Christians did, by virtue of the *Christian Name*, resist the fiercest Temptations, their usual Answer to those that did sollicite them, and by Tortures would force them to renounce their Religion, being no more than this, *I am a Christian, it is therefore in vain for you to tempt me.* 4. 'Pray' think upon the Indecency of living unsuitably to the *Christian Name* and Profession. *Know you not that your Bodies are the Members of Christ? Shall I then take the Members of Christ, and make them the Members of an Harlot? God forbid,* 1 Cor. 6. 15. And, 5. Bethink your selves, that to quit other Purposes we give up our selves to be Christians; namely, to season and guide the World by the Exemplariness of our Lives, for which reason we are called the *Salt of the Earth*, Matth. 5. 13. and the *Light of the World*, v. 14. Lastly, And indeed since most *Christian Names* do

do afford some Examples of Vertue; which should prompt Christians to an Imitation of those who were eminent under these Names; I would therefore advise Parents to chuse for their Children the Names of Persons eminent for Vertue, not infamous for Vice. And let this suffice to have been observed upon the Question and Answer concerning your *Christian Name*.

T H E

IV. L E C T U R E.

Quest. **Who gave you that Name?**

Ans. **My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism, wherein I was made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.**

Quest. **What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you?**

Ans. **They did Promise and Vow three things in my Name. First, That I should renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World; and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. Secondly, That I should Believe all the**

Articles of the Christian Faith: And, Thirdly, That I should keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my Life.

Quest. Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and to do as they have promised for thee?

Answ. Yes, verily; and by God's help so I will. And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this State of Salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour: And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.

THE most easie Method of Instruction, and such as does most effectually convey Knowledge to the Minds of Men, is that which gives first some general Notices of the Art or Science about to be taught, and which does then descend to a larger Explication thereof in its several Particulars. And accordingly our *Catechism* gives you an entire Instruction in the Covenant of Grace, both *generally and particularly*: *Generally*, in the three first Questions and Answers now read to you, which are therefore usually call'd *Preliminary*: *Particularly*, in the *Creed*, *Decalogue*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and in the *Doctrine of the Sacraments*.

1. *I fhall begin with the general Nature of the Covenant of Grace, which I fhall have fufficiently explain'd by then I have gone through with my Exposition of thefe Words now read. Now,*

As to the general Notion of fuch Covenants, as are ufually made betwixt Governors and their Subjects; which approach neareft to the Nature of ours; fuch a one, if it be perfect in all its Parts, and fully expreffed, may be defin'd to be

A Mutual Agreement between the Two Parties, wherein there are Promifes, Rewards, or profitable Confiderations made over on one part, on certain Conditions to be perform'd on the other: And wherein alfo there is an Obligation on the one fide, of undergoing fome certain Penalties, in cafe of not performing thofe Conditions confented unto by him, and impos'd on him by the other.

A Covenant, I fay, is a mutual Agreement between two Parties. For where both the Parties are not Confenting to the Terms, the one to the making good the Promifes, the other to the performance of the Conditions, the Agreement is none at all, or it is not perfected; nor is it obliging on either fide. And tho' where the one Party has Sovereign Authority over the other, there arifes from that an obligation to Obedience, yet without the Formality of a mutual Agreement, the Will of the Superiour is then only a Law, not a Covenant.

Farther yet, In a Covenant there are certain Promifes, Rewards, and profitable Confiderations made over on one part, on certain Conditions to be perform'd on the other. And upon the performance of thefe Conditions there accrues a Title to

Promises, insomuch that upon our Repentance, and *Confession of our Sins*, God will reckon himself in *Justice and Faithfulness* bound (since the giving of the New Covenant) *to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness*, 1 Joh. 1. 9. And this may suffice, in order to shew the general Nature of a Covenant.

And now to understand the distinct Nature and Notion of the Covenant of Grace, we must look back even as far as the Creation, and consider how that *God having made Man upright*, and put him into a Capacity never to have violated his Covenant; he did then engage him to a Perfect, Exact, and Unsinning Obedience. The Result whereof was, That Man being overcome by the Temptation of the Devil, he did transgress the Law given by his Maker, *Gen. 2. 17.* and did violate his Covenant with him. Whereupon the Divine Justice, Wisdom, and Holiness requir'd Satisfaction; and it was requisite that Punishment must ensue, if it were but to manifest the Divine Hatred of Sin, and for the Security of God's Government in the World.

But what Creature is there in the Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, whose Punishment could be of that Value and Consideration, as to be a sufficient Satisfaction for the Sins of Mankind? It is certain, *no Man can redeem his Brother, or pay God a Ransom for him; for the redemption of his Soul is precious*, (too precious for that) *Psal. 49. 7, 8.* And Man being himself incapable to make it, by less than suffering an everlasting Punishment; the Son of God did himself therefore most graciously offer to die
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in our stead, and did undertake by the Infinite Merit of his own Sufferings, to make Satisfaction to Infinite Justice, which we could not; so 2 Cor. 5. 21. *He made him to be Sin, or a Sin-offering for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him;* and because whilst under the First Covenant, which requir'd a Perfect, Exact, and Unsinning Obedience, it was impossible for us to be sav'd, the Son of God did therefore cancel that upon the Cross, and did purchase by his most precious Blood, a Covenant of Grace in its stead; for which reason he is called the *Mediator of a better Covenant*, Heb. 8. 6. He did purchase a Covenant of Grace, I say, consisting of Conditions performable in our fallen State, wherein Repentance, Faith, and a sincere Obedience is accepted, instead of a perfect, and an indefective Righteousness.

In short, the Covenant of Grace resembles the Articles of Accommodation made through the Intercession of a Prince's Eldest Son, betwixt that Prince and his Rebellious Subjects, to whom upon the Intercession of his Son, the King is graciously pleas'd to Grant, not only Pardon of all their former Crimes; but moreover certain great Priviledges and Freedoms, Protection, and several particular Favours, Lands and Possessions, and the like, on condition they will thenceforward *Renounce* and For-sake all his Enemies, and place no farther Trust nor Confidence in them; and on condition they will not disobey him for the future, in any of his just and reasonable Commands, but pay him a

true and faithful Obedience to all Laws.

Much of the same Nature is the Covenant of Grace ; and as it does extremely much concern every Christian to be well instructed in it ; so there is little necessary to be known in the Christian Religion, besides the Articles of this Covenant. And the Catechetical Method of Instruction being the most useful to that purpose, of all others, it does therefore very much concern you to pay a due attendance to it.

T H E
V. L E C T U R E.

**Wherein I was made a Member of
Christ.**

A General View of the *Covenant of Grace*, I have already given you. And these Words, *Wherein I was made a Member of Christ*, do contain the the first of these invaluable Privileges made over to us in this Covenant.

Now, to be a Member of Christ, is to be a Member of *Christ's Church*, as will appear from *Col. 1. 18.* compared with *Eph. 5. 30.* And that you may be sensible how happy a thing it is to be a Member of *Christ's Church*.

First, *I will shew you what kind of Body the Church of Christ is.*

Secondly, *What it is to be a Member of it.* And then,

Thirdly, *What exceeding great and invaluable Privileges do belong to every Member of Christ's Church.* And,

1. *I will shew you what kind of Body the Church of Christ is.* And it is the Universal Society of all Christians, consisting both of Lawful Governors and Pastors, and also of the People of God committed to their Charge; and who are call'd from out of the wicked World by the Preaching of the Gospel, to a Holy Profession and Calling, namely to Repentance, Faith, and Obedience towards God; and to the Enjoyment of unspeakable Priviledges from God: And who to the end of being incorporated into one Society, and of having God to be their God, and they themselves his People, have entered into Covenant with him by Baptism, and do often renew the same in the Lord's Supper, and are Incorporated thereby into one Body, subdivided indeed into several particular Bodies, and Churches, for the convenience of Government and Worship; but holding Communion with one another, in one and the same necessary Points of Christianity, necessary to constitute the Church under Jesus Christ their Supream Head.

And first, I say, the Church of Christ is the Society of Christians, consisting both of Lawful Governors and Pastors, and of the People of God committed to their Charge. The Church of Christ is not a Headless Multitude, but a well-ordered Society, consisting of Superiors and Inferiors; of Governors and Governed. Hence it is called,

call'd *The Kingdom of Christ*, Rev. 11. 15. And Eph. 2. 19, 20, 21. the Members thereof are stil'd *Fellow-Citizens*, Members of an Household, and Parts of a Temple; all which Expressions speak the Church of Christ to be a Regular Society of Men, combin'd and knit together by Laws, deriv'd from some Supreme Head and Governour.

And in the Constitution of Christ's Church, it is requisite that the Governors and Pastors thereof should be lawful ones; that is, such as Christ has Commission'd to these Offices; for St. Paul does sharply demand, *Rom. 10. 15. How any shall Preach the Gospel, except they be sent?* And that an Episcopal Clergy are undoubtedly Authorized, and sent (whatever others are) cannot be question'd, since our Saviour, when he sent forth his Disciples into the world, to Preach the Gospel, and to gather a Church, he told them, *Mat. 28. 20. That he would be with them, or stand by them in giving Authority and Success to their Ministry, to the end of the World*; whereas for 1500 Years it is certain, that he did Authorize no other then those *Episcopally Ordain'd*; for there were no other than *Episcopal Churches* during that time, as appears from the Histories of all Ages.

Secondly, *The Church of Christ is the Universal Society of Christians*. The Church under the Law was confin'd to the Jewish Nation, but now under the Gospel, *in every Nation he that feareth God and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him*, Acts 10. 35. *For Christ is our Peace, and hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle Wall of Partition between us*, Eph. 2. 14. It is

is not indeed either Jews or Gentiles, while they continue such, that are of the Church of Christ. But,

Thirdly, *It consists of such, who are called forth out of the wicked World, from amongst both.* The whole World by then our Saviour came into it, was over-run with Wickedness; and therefore did Christ come to call us out of the World; for which Reasons, Christians are in many places stiled the *Called*: And *Joh. 17. 6.* they are said to be such, whom the Father hath *given our Saviour out of the World*; and tho' they are in the World, yet they are not *of the World*, v. 16. And tho' it is too true, that many of those of whom the Church is composed, do not effectually obey this Call, but continue ungodly; and therefore the Church is liken'd, *Mat. 13. 24, 30.* to a Field in which the *Wheat* and the *Tares* grew up together until the Harvest. However,

Fourthly, All the Members of the Church of Christ, are called by the *Preaching of the Gospel, to a Holy Profession and Calling*; namely, 1. To Repentance; for so our Saviour says, that he came to call *Sinners to Repentance*, *Matth. 9. 13.* And, 2. they are called to the Knowledge, Belief, and Service of the One True God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The greatest part of the World before our Saviour's coming into it, were ignorant of the True God, and Slaves to the Devil; But our blessed Lord when he gave Commission to his Disciples to gather a Church out of the World, he bid them *go and Disciple all Nations*, Baptizing Persons into the Knowledge, Belief, and Service of Three Persons

sons *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, in that one God-head, *Matth. 28. 19.*

Fifthly, And as Christians are a Society of persons called out of the World to Repentance, Faith, and Gospel-Obedience; so to the Enjoyment of those *inestimable Priviledges of the Gospel*, viz. most Reasonable and Excellent Laws to conduct them to Heaven; *Laws written in their Minds, and in their hearts*, *Heb. 8. 10.* They are called also to the Enjoyment of Divine Grace and Assistance, to enable them to obey those Laws; for *Grace is come by Jesus Christ*, *John 1. 17.* They shall be priviledged with the Pardon of Sins, upon their Repentance, for the Violation of those Laws; for God has promis'd Christians to be *Merciful to their Unrighteousness*, *Heb. 8. 12.* And lastly, they shall be called to the Enjoyment of *Eternal Life and Happiness*, upon their sincere Obedience; for Christ does assure us, *John 17. 2.* That the *Father hath given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give Eternal Life to as many as are given him, or are given him out of the World*, v. 6.

Sixthly, The Church consists of such, who to the end of being incorporated into the Society, and of having God to be their God, and they themselves his People, have entered into Covenant with him. It is the Royal Charter granted by the King that makes any number of Men a Corporation. And it is the Covenant of Grace granted by the King of kings, which embodies and joins us Christians into one Spiritual Society. So that we are no more Strangers and Foreigners,

ners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, Eph. 2. 19.

And by being in Covenant with him, we come to have God to be our God; and we do thereby become his People. Thus Heb. 8. 10. *This is the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days; that is, in the time of the Gospel, I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People.*

Seventhly, Christians are thus entered into Covenant with God, and thereby made Members of *Christ's Church, in their Baptism*, which is the Outward Sign and Solemnity whereby our Blessed Lord thought fit to initiate all the Members of his Church into Covenant with him. *Go and Disciple, or make Disciples and Members of my Church, out of all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Matth. 28. 19.* And hence 1 Cor. 12. 13. it is said *That we are all Baptized into one Body*, or admitted by Baptism into one Church.

Eighthly, And all the Members of *Christ's Church*, when grown up to some State of Perfection, are appointed to *Renew the same Covenant*, by Feasting often together at the Lord's Supper. Upon the account of which Feasting together, it is said, 1 Cor. 10. 17. *That we being many, are one Bread, and one Body, for we are all Partakers of that one Bread.*

Ninthly, and now upon these forementioned Accounts, the Church of Christ is one Body. Thus, Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6. *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God*

God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Tenthly, This one Body or Society the Church, is divided into several particular Bodies or Churches, both for the convenience of Discipline and Government, and also the convenience of Divine Worship. For the convenience of Government, the Church has from its first Foundation been divided into *Diocesan Churches*, inspected by distinct Bishops, as will appear from *Rev. 2. Chap. 3.* where you will find that the several Churches of *Asia* had their distinct Bishops (there called Angels) presiding over them. For the convenience of Divine Worship, because all the Christians of one Diocese or City, could not meet together in one Place, the Bishop's See was therefore sub-divided into particular Congregations and Assemblies under its respective Pastors. Hence we read *1 Cor. 14. 34.* of several Churches in that one Church and City of *Corinth*.

But notwithstanding that, for the forementioned Reasons, the Church of God is divided and subdivided into *Diocesan* and *Parochial Churches*, yet they are all united by Virtue of the same Covenant, Spirit, and Sacraments, into one Church: For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and the Members of that one Body being many, are one Body; so also is Christ, or the Christian Church; for by one Spirit we are all Baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit, *1 Cor. 12. 12, 13.* And these several Churches were also one. Because in the

Eleventh place they all hold Communion with each other. And their Communion with each other, consisted in Hearing the same Word or Doctrine together, in joining in the same Common Prayers, in partaking of the same Sacraments, and in affording to each other mutual Assistances, as you will find *Acts 2. 42. They continued stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine, and Fellowship, or Communication of charitable Assistances, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers.*

Lastly, The Church of Christ, or this whole Society of Men, call'd forth out of the World to such Duties and Privileges, as has been spoke, is to be united into one Body, as has been declared, under *Jesus Christ its Supreme Head.* There can be no Body without a Head. And Christ is both the *Political Body* of the Church, governing this his Spiritual Kingdom, as a Monarch does his State, by his Laws; for the Father having raised him from the Dead, did put all things under his Feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, *Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22, 23.* And as a King he sends his Ambassadors and Ministers to teach Mankind, to observe all things whatsoever he Commanded them, *Matth. 28. 20.* And Christ is also the *Mystical Head* of the Church; for as the Natural Head of the Body is the Fountain of Life and Spirit, from whence it is deriv'd into all the parts of the Body, to enable and enliven all the Members thereof to discharge their several Offices and Duties; so is Christ said to be the *Mystical Head* of the Church, from whom all the Body, by Joints and Bands, having nourishment

ment ministred, increaseth with the increase of God,
Col. 2. 19.

And thus in order to a due understanding of this first *Privilegial Article* of the Baptismal Covenant; *Wherein I was made a Member of Christ*, you have seen what kind of Body the *Church of Christ* is. And from the whole it does appear to be, what it is often call'd in Scripture, viz. *The Kingdom of God, and of Christ*, as Matth. 21. 31. Rev. 11. 15. that is, as ye have been told, it is a Spiritual Kingdom put up by God in the World, on purpose to reduce Man to his due Allegiance to his Maker, and to destroy the Dominion of Satan, which he had so long usurp'd over Mankind. And thus having as briefly, as possibly I could, shew'd you what kind of Body the *Church of Christ* is.

2. *I am next to shew you what it is to be a Member of Christ's Church.*

And from what has been said, it may easily be collected, that a Member of *Christ's Church* is every one who has been enter'd into this visible Society of Men *Renouncing* the Devil, and *Professing* themselves the Servants of God. He is one who has Covenanted to that purpose with God in Baptism, and who without swerving aside into Separate Assemblies, holds a constant Communion with that particular *True, and Orthodox Church*, whereof he is a Member, and in whose Verge he lives.

In short, a *Member of the Church of Christ*, is a *Member of the Kingdom of Christ*; and so he is one who is deliver'd by God from the Power of *Darkness*, and is translated into the Kingdom of
his

his dear Son, Col. 1. 13. That is, he is one of those, who is deliver'd by the Gospel from under the Tyranny of Satan, under which the whole World was held Captive, and is made a Subject to the Gracious Government of the Son of God.

From what has been said, it does plainly appear, I think, that such, and such an one only, is a true *Member of Christ's Church*.

And in the Sense of the *Catechism*, which teaches all to answer, that in their Baptism they are made Members of Christ: *Every Person*, who has been admitted into the Church by Baptism, is a *Member of Christ*, and shall continue such, till he is cut off by the just Sentence of those Governors of the Church, who have the *Power of the Keys* to receive in, or to shut out: Or till he cuts off himself from that Mystical Body, by a causeless Schism and Separation from any of its sound Parts.

Every Baptized Person, I say, is a Member of Christ's Church. So the Apostle, Gal. 3. 27. *As many as have been baptized into Christ*; that is, the Christian Religion, *have put on Christ*, or have put on that Relation to Christ, which Members have to the Body, and tho' too many are *unsound Members*, yet Members of the *Visible Church* they will continue till cut off by the just Sentence of those, who have the *Power of the Keys* to receive in, or to shut out: Or till they cut off themselves by a causeless Separation and Schism.

Some are cut off from the Communion of the Church by the Governours thereof, who have given

unto 'em the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; that is, of the Church, Matth. 16. 19. and who have the Authority, as to admit into the Church by *Baptism*, all who have made Profession of Christianity, so to expel out of it by *Excommunication* all those scabby Members thereof, who contrary to such their Holy Profession, either by their pestilent Heresies, or by their scandalous and ill Lives, are unworthy of its Communion, or in danger to infect it. And when upon either of these accounts any one is Excommunicated, such an evil Member becomes no Member, and is to be to the rest as a Heathen Man, and a *Publican*; that is, one who is out of the Church Matth. 18. 17.

And so likewise is he, who cuts himself off from that Mystical Body the Church, by a causeless Separation and Schism from any of its sound Parts: For whatever National Church has nothing in its Doctrine, nor Worship, which is sinful, every Person is bound to continue stedfastly in the Doctrine, Prayers, Sacraments, and Fellowship of that Church, as in the Apostles Times they did, Acts 2. 42. and to reject the Communion of all other Sects and Parties of Christians; or otherwise, he will cut himself off from the Church, and will cease to be a real Member of it, as my Finger will cease to be of the Body, when it is cut off as well by my self, as by another, from the Arm. But excepting these two Cases, every Baptized Person is a Member of Christ's Church, and so shall partake of those exceeding great Privileges, which belongs to the Members of it; which, what, and how great they are, I am next to declare unto you.

THE

THE VI LECTURE.

wherein I was made a Member of
Christ.

HAVING sufficiently made it appear in the former Discourse, *First*, what kind of Body that is, which is called, the *Church of Christ*: And also, *Secondly*, having shew'd you what it is to be a *Member of it*; it will be now requisite that I should likewise make it clear to you, *Thirdly*, *What vast and invaluable Priviledges do accordingly belong to every Member of the Church of Christ.* And the Privileges which do belong to them as such, are,

First, A most Excellent Body of Religion, Laws, and Ordinances, appointed us by Christ our Supreme Head and Governour, as the Rule we must walk by in our way to Heaven.

Secondly, A sufficient measure of Divine Grace and Assistance, derived down upon us from him our Mystical Head, and convey'd by those his Ordinances, to enable us to Conform our selves to his Religion, and to obey those Laws.

I. And as the Members of Christ's Church we enjoy the Priviledge of having a most Excellent Body of Religion, Laws, and Ordinances: A Religion so Excellent, that whether we compare it with the Pagan or Mahometan Superstition, or with the Jewish Dispensation: or whether we consider it in its own Nature, it will appear to be a most

singular Institution, and Body of Laws; and such as we ought to esteem it our very great Happiness and Privilege above other Men, that we are under the Government of such.

Alas! As to the *Pagan Superstition*, what else did it tend to, but to debase Mankind infinitely below the Dignity of their Nature, and to defile 'em much more then the Brutes; For why? The very Gods the Heathens worshipped, were at best the most infamous Men and Women; and many of 'em paid Divine Honours to the very Devil themselves. And what then could be expected, but that their Worship should consist in Lewd, Barbarous, and Cruel Rites? And so it actually did; *For they Sacrific'd their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils, and shed Innocent Blood, even the Blood of their Sons, and of their Daughters, whom the very Jews, having learnt it from the Pagans, Sacrificed unto the Idols of Canaan, Ps. 106. 37, 38.*

Nor in the *Mahometan Superstition* is there any thing worthy of God, whereby we should judge him to be the Author of it; but as one observes, *It is a Mass of Foolish Opinions, odd Stories, uncouth Ceremonies, compounded chiefly of the Dregs of Christian Heresies, together with some Ingredients of Judaism and Paganism, confusedly jumbld; on unskilfully mixt one with another. And what is worst of all, its Principles do too sadly tend to Lust and Cruelty.*

And even *Judaism* it self, which had God for its Author, was but an Imperfect and an Unfinish'd draught of Religion. Its Ceremonial part consisted of poor and beggarly Elements, Gal. 4. 9. and

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and of *Shadows only of good things to come*, Heb. 10. 1. And event its *Moral* part was defective, *Moses for the hardness of their hearts*, Matth. 19. 8. being forc'd to indulge 'em, what the Perfection and Purity of the Christian Religion will by no means allow of.

But *Christianity* (under whose Guidance we have the Happiness to be, as we are *Members of Christ's Church*) is a most Excellent Religion, since nothing can represent God in more Noble Characters, and Glorious Perfections, and nothing can give a more Honourable and Rational Draught of his Proceedings with Man, both in the Creation and Redemption of him, than it does. And as the Christian Laws are infinitely beyond what the Wisdom of any Humane Law-givers did ever yet contrive for the good Order of Man in this World, and for his real Happiness both in this, and in the World to come; so no Motives, nor Reasons can possibly be more persuasive than those which Christianity does give us to obey those Laws.

And indeed even the *positive Institutions* and *Ordinances* appointed in the Gospel, are an Excellent part of a Christian Priviledge, which he enjoys as he is a *Member of Christ's Church*. And that which our Law-giver has appointed of this Nature, are as follows; He has ordain'd Solemn and Set days, *viz.* the Christian Sabbaths for his Service; He has Ordered that Publick Assemblies of all Christians should be held upon these days; He has Authoriz'd and Commanded the Preaching of his Laws at those Publick Assemblies; He has appointed that

Common Prayer, Supplications, and Thanksgiving, Principally for divine Grace and Assistance to enable us to perform these Laws then Preach'd, and for other Mercies; I say, he has Ordered that these should be jointly put up to him by all Christians on those Solemn Days, and those Publick Assemblies; And lastly, He has enjoin'd therein the use of Sacraments, as means of conveying such Grace and Assistance, and also as Oaths and Obligations upon us to be Obedient to those Laws. These are the *positive Institutions and Ordinances* of the Gospel; and all these are Priviledges which belong to the *Members of Christ's Church*, as may be gathered from *Acts 2. 41, 42.*

And they are indeed most *singular Favours* and Priviledges vouchsafed only to such as are *Members of Christ's Church*, and which *Aliens and Strangers* have no Right and Admittance to. For alas, the Infidel part of the World, whether *Jews, Turks, or Pagans*, have not the Benefit of the Word and Sacraments; and *where there is no Vision, or no Word and Ordinances of Divine Revelation, the People perish*, Prov. 29. 18.

And even the *positive Institutions* also are most Excellent Priviledges *considered in themselves*; and that first, as being most admirable Helps towards the Observation of God's most Holy Laws, every one of these outward Ordinances conducing much to our Edification, and Improvement both in Faith and Practice, and to the quickening of our Affections to the ways of God: And every one of them being also exceedingly

ingly comfortable to the Souls of those who do enjoy them, according to the Testimony of the Psalmist: *Blessed is the Man whom thou chusest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts: He shall be satisfied in the Goodness of thy House, even of thy Holy Temple,* Psal 65. 4.

The Priviledges of Publick Ordinances are indeed seldom sufficiently valued, till most wanted; but when through Persecutions, or the like, Persons are depriv'd of them, then they become so sensible of the Benefit and Comfort thereof, as to be at any Pains, Fatigues, or Dangers to enjoy them. *They will then wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East; they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it,* Amos 8. 12. And let this suffice for the first great Priviledge, which does peculiarly belong to all the Members of Christ's visible Church, as they are Members of such a Society: namely, the Enjoyment of a most reasonable and excellent Body of Religion and Laws; together with most Profitable and Edifying Institutions and Ordinances, given and appointed us by Him, our Supreme Head and Governor, to conduct us to Heaven. The

II Priviledge we enjoy thereby is a great Measure of Divine Grace and Assistance, derived down from Him our Head, and conveyed by those his Ordinances to enable us to conform to his Religion, and to obey his Laws; for as in the natural Body every part partakes of Life, and Sence, and Motion, from the Head, so do we by be-

ing Baptized Members of Christ, derive Grace and Help from him our Head, *from whom all the Body by Joints and Bands having Nourishment ministred, increaseth with the increase of God,* Col. 2. 19. And the means of Union betwixt Christ and his Members, being the Members Union to the *Catholick Church*, the Body of Christ; and their Union to the Lawful Governours and Teachers of the Church, which are the principal parts of the *Mystical Body*, And lastly, their use of Christ's Institutions and Ordinances, *viz.* Sacraments, Preaching, Publick and Common-Prayers, and such like publick Offices, which are the Vessels and Conveyances of Divine Grace, through the Principal Parts from Christ our Head: These, I say, being the necessary Means of Union between Christ and his Members, it will therefore follow, that so long as any Member shall continue in Unity with the *Mystical Body of Christ*, his Church, and with its Lawful Governours and Teachers, and in the use of Sacraments, and other Divine Ordinances, those Conduits and Conveyances of his Holy Spirit to us; so long he shall have spiritual Life, and Strength, and Vigour, derived down from Christ our spiritual Head, in like manner as in the natural Body of Man, the Animal Life, and Strength, and Vigour is derived to all the parts of the Body from the natural Head.

And the having of God's Holy Spirit to assist us, is a most *singular* Priviledge, if compar'd with that little, or nothing of this Nature, which others, who are not the Members
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of Christ's Church, do enjoy ; for if God would have ordinarily, and in the way of a constant Dispensation, imparted so excellent a Gift as the Grace of his Holy Spirit to any, to be sure it would have been to the *Jewish Church* ; but so unsteady, and scanty were the Measures of it communicated under the Law, to what are under the Gospel, that the former is stiled upon that account by the Apostle, *the Ministration of Condemnation, but the Gospel the Ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 8, 9.

And this having of the Holy Spirit to assist us is a most exceeding advantage, consider'd in it self, considering that all the Members of Christ have constant supplies of Grace afforded 'em proportionable to their Station and Employment in the Church, whether Governours, or Teachers, or private Christians ; for the *Manifestation of the Spirit is given to every Man to profit withal*. So that to one is given by the Spirit, *the Word of Wisdom*, to another the *Word of Knowledge*, by the same Spirit, to another *Faith*, by the same Spirit, 1 Cor. 12. 7. 8, 9.

And the Grace and Assistance derived down from Christ the Head, to the several Members of his Spiritual Body, because they may be such as shall be necessary and proper for 'em, are distributed in such Measures and Proportions as shall be wanting according to the different Times and occasions in the Church ; and therefore in the first Ages, because there was a necessity of uncontrollable Evidences of the Truth of Christianity, as well to beat down the false Superstition of the *Pagans*, and the

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Antiquated Religion of the *Jews*, as to convince those who were to yield themselves up to be Christ's Disciples; for this reason therefore, did Christ, according to these greater Exigences of the Church in those times, bestow upon his Apostles divers extraordinary *Gifts of Miracles, Prophecy, Discerning of Spirits, divers kinds of Tongues, and the Interpretation of Tongues*, 1 Cor. 12. 10. And so much for the first of these Priviledges made over to us in the Covenant.

THE VII. LECTURE.

Wherein I was made a Child of God,

THis is the second of those invaluable Priviledges made over to us on God's part, in the Covenant of Grace. To make you sensible of the vastness of which, I will,

First, *Shew you what is meant in Scripture, and here in your Catechism, by a Child of God.*

Secondly, *What an inestimable Priviledge accordingly it is to be a Child of God. And,*

I. As to the Importance of the Words; *A Child of God*, is a Phrase which bears various Acceptations in the Holy Scriptures, which must all of them be consider'd, ere we can come to the proper meaning of it here in the Catechism.

And, *First*, In the highest, most natural, and most proper meaning of the Word, there is He who is the Son, or *Child of God*, by an *Eternal Generation*, viz. our Saviour Jesus Christ, who being begotten of God the Father from all Eternity, in a peculiar, inconceivable, and inexpressible manner, so as to be coequal and coeternal with the Father himself, is called the *only Begotten Son of God*, John. 3. 16. But this is a Sense infinitely too high for either Angels or Men to pretend to.

Secondly, By a *Temporary Creation* all reasonable Creatures, both Angels and Men, are the *Sons of God*, as may be gathered from *Job* 1. 6. and *Luke* 3. 38. But that which is meant by the Son of God here in the Catechism, being a Privilege such as all Mankind cannot pretend to, this is a sense too wide wherein to understand the Phrase.

Thirdly, By *Spiritual Regeneration*, all those who have been Sanctify'd by the Holy Spirit, and have their whole Natures and Dispositions so altered for the better, that from Vicious and Ungodly, they are chang'd to Vertuous and Holy Tempers and Inclinations; in a way of *Spiritual Regeneration*, I say, all Holy Men and Women are the *Children of God*: So the Apostle affirms, *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 14.

But then, since it is plain, that in Scripture many are called the *Children of God*, who are no more dutiful to their Father which is in Heaven, than all Children are to their *Natural Parents*, according to that complaint of God against

against

gainst such, *Hear, O Heaven, and give Ear, O Earth, for I the Lord have spoken it; I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have Rebelled against me, Isai. 1. 2.* And since in the Catechism it is required of every Baptized Person to Answer, that in his Baptism he was made a *Child of God*, whereas many Baptized Persons are not actually renew'd and converted; It must therefore follow, that a *Child of God by Spiritual Regeneration or Godlike Imitation* must be a meaning of the Phrase as much too narrow to be the sense of it here in the Catechism, as a *Child by Creation* was too wide.

Fourthly and Lastly, Then, by a *Child of God* must be meant in the Catechism, every one who may be so stiled either by a *Covenant Relation*, or by virtue of *Adoption*. By a *Covenant Relation* all those who have enter'd into the Covenant of Grace, and have been Baptized into Christ's Church, and who do profess the true Religion, and themselves the Servants of the True God, are stiled his Sons, or Children. Thus 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17, 18. you will find that with relation to all those, concerning whom God declared, *He would be their God and that they should be his People*, which are the exprefs Terms of the Covenant, betwixt God and all Christians; as you will see, Heb. 8. 10. And with relation to all those whom he commanded to *come out from among the Gentiles, and to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing*, that is, not to partake in their Idolatry, which is the very Discription of the Members of Christ's Church; I say, with relation

tion to all these, he declar'd *He would be a Father unto 'em, and that they should be his Sons and Daughters.* So that by virtue of their Covenant-Relation, all Baptized Persons may be truly stiled the Children of God.

And so also by virtue of their *Adoption*, which according to the use of it, both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; was the *Taking in of a Stranger*, upon the want or loss of *Natural Issue*, into the Relation of a *Child*, and into the *Rights and Privileges of a Son by Nature.*

And now that we may understand how we Christians, especially such of us as are descended from the *Gentiles*, are accordingly *Adopted to be the Children of God*, we are to consider that to the *Israelites* did once pertain the *Adoption*, and the *Glory*, and the *Covenants*, and the *giving of the Law*, and the *Service of God*, and the *Promises*, Rom. 9. 4. But that Covenant, by entering into which they were made his Children, was only Temporary, to last no longer than till the Publishing of the Gospel; after which they and all Christians were to be Children of God by Faith in Christ. Before that Faith, or the Gospel came, the *Jews* were kept under the Law, shut up unto the Faith, which should afterwards be revealed which was their School-Master, to bring them to Christ; but after that Faith, or the Gospel was come, they were to be no longer under a School-Master, but were to be Children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ, Gal. 3. 23, 24, 25, 26. And accordingly, when the fullness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law

Law, that they might receive the Adoption of Sons Gal. 4. 4, 5. But the Jews adhering to their Law, and refusing Christ and his Gospel, in whom God had predestinated all into the Adoption of Children, Eph. 1. 5. the Apostles upon this their Contempt of the Gospel-Covenant, turned themselves unto the Gentiles, Preaching Christ and Salvation to them; And to as many as received him, to them gave he Power, or the Right and Priviledge, to be the Sons of God, John 1. 12. So that by a Child of God, you see, is meant in the Catechism, not every Child by Creation, which is a sense too wide; nor on the other side only a Child of God by Regeneration, which is a sense as much too narrow: But every one is such, who has entered into Covenant with God, and whom the Heavenly Father has thereupon Adopted into his Family, to partake of the Priviledges which belong to his Adopted Sons; which brings me,

Secondly, To enquire what an inestimable Priviledge accordingly it is to be made a Child of God. And in general, it is such as an indulgent, but wise Father, may be suppos'd to allow his Children beyond Aliens and Strangers. But more particularly, the

First Priviledge belonging to us upon the account of this Relation of being made the Children of God, is Pardon of Sins, upon condition of our hearty Repentance, which is more than what Aliens and Strangers from the Covenant have any sure Grounds to hope, as may be concluded from Eph. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Secondly, By being his Children, he will not be so severe as to mark what is done amiss by
Sins

Sins of Infirmary. The First Covenant made no allowance for any the least Offence. Its Language was, *In the Day thou shalt eat thereof, thou shalt surely die*, Gen. 2. 17. But the Voice of the Gospel, tho' it be exprest by the *Psalmist*, is, *As a Father pitieth his own Children, even so the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; that is, who do not willingly displease him, *Psal.* 103. 13.

Thirdly, To the Children of God is granted an easier access by Prayer, to the Throne of Grace, for Pardon of Sins, and other Mercies, than was to either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, who for want of such gracious Covenant Promises as we enjoy, were kept in a servile Fear. *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, as under the Law, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry unto God, Abba, Father*, Rom. 8. 15.

Lastly, A Child of God is more surely instated in the Heritage of Heaven, than others. If a Child of God, then Heirs, we are told, *Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ*, Rom. 8. 17. But the vastness of this Priviledge will best be considered in our Explication of the next Article of our Baptismal Covenant, viz. what is meant by an *Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

THE

VIII. LECTURE.

An Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.

THis is the third of those Priviledges conferr'd upon us by the second Covenant; and the Perfection it is of all God's Promises and Favours vouchsafed to us therein. It comes last and Crowns all the rest. *Be faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life,* Rev. 2. 10. And that I may so explain it to you, as to excite you thereby to render your selves capable to be Partakers thereof.

First, *I will shew what is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Secondly, *What it imports to be an Inheritor of it.*

And then lastly, I will lay before you the vastness of our Priviledge in being made Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And 1st. By the Kingdom of Heaven is meant in Scripture, either first the *Kingdom of Grace in this Life*; or secondly, *The Kingdom of Glory in the Life to come*. First, By the *Kingdom of Grace in this Life*, is to be understood that Happy and Blessed State of us Christians, now under

under the Gospel ; wherein we enjoy the Happiness of living under a Government, wholly made up of manifold Graces and Favours ; having a most Gracious God governing us by most Gracious and Reasonable Laws, affording us a plentiful measure of Divine Grace and Assistance to perform those Laws, and proposing to us most encouraging Rewards to a diligent observance of them. It is this happy State which was foretold by St. John the Baptist to be approaching, *Mat. 3. 2. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* And it is this, for an undue Entertainment of which, the *Scribes and Pharisees* were upbraided, *Mat. 13. 24.*

And the reason why this State of the Gospel should be so often dignified, as we find it is in Scripture, with the Title of *the Kingdom of Heaven*, is because it so directly tends to render Men so exactly like the Blessed Saints and Inhabitants in Heaven, according to that noble Prophecy concerning the genuine Nature and Disposition of the Gospel, *Isa. 11. 1. which you would do well to consult at large.* But,

Secondly, By *the Kingdom of Heaven*, here in the Catechism, is to be understood the *Kingdom of Glory*, mentioned *Matth. 5. 3. 20. Chap. 7. 21.* and elsewhere. That exalted State of Bliss in Heaven, I say, which is a State so glorious, that there is nothing wherein we can imagine the greatest Glory and Happiness, as a Kingdom, a Crown, a Throne, a Marriage, a Feast, but are set forth to represent to us the Joys and Glories of our Future State, and yet as if a Kingdom, a Crown, a Throne, were

infinitely too short to set forth the Joys and Glories of Heaven, and those infinite Blessings which do await the Sons of God: St. *John* tells us, *It does not yet appear what we shall be*, 1 Joh. 3. 2.

II. And having thus seen what is meant by *the Kingdom of Heaven*; next, let us enquire what it is to be *an Inheritor of it*. And Heirship does betoken something of Privilege more than ordinary, as you will find *Gen. 21. 10*. And as amongst Men an Heir is one, whose Estate is not precariously depending upon the meer Will and arbitrary Pleasure of another, but he has it so settled and secured to him, as to have a legal Claim and Title thereto made over to him, so long as he does not forfeit his Title by not performing the Conditions on which it depends: So in Christianity, *an Heir of the Kingdom of Heaven*, does not depend meerly upon the *Unconvenanted Goodness of God* for his Hopes of Heaven and Happiness; but he is one, who being taken into the Relation of a *Child of God*, has through Christ a legal Claim to the Joys of Heaven, *If a Son, then an Heir of God through Christ*, Gal. 4. 7. As an Heir, I say, he has a legal Claim and Title to the unspeakable Glories made over to him by God; God having by solemn Promise engaged to bestow upon him the most unspeakable Joys of Heaven, provided he swerves not from his Allegiance and Obedience to him; but renouncing all God's Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, he will Believe in him, and Obey him, truly and faithfully, all the Days of his Life. *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they*
may

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may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City, Rev. 22. 14.

III. And now it will appear, that to be thus an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, is in it self an exceeding great Privilege. And if compar'd with what others enjoy, a most singular one also.

1. Consider it in it self, and what can be a greater than to have the invaluable Possession of Heaven so settled and ensured to us, as to have a legal Claim and Title thereto made over to us in Christ? Then to have a *Right to the Tree of Life, Rev. 22. 14.*

And if compar'd with what the Heathens enjoy of this Nature, it is a *singular Privilege*: For why? The best among the moral Heathens could have but faint Hopes, built upon uncertain Conjectures, of a Future Happiness. And their Hopes being faint, they could not in the strength thereof overcome any mighty Temptations: But the Christian Hopes are sure and stedfast, as founded upon the express Promises and Covenant of the God of Truth: *For God, willing more abundantly to shew to the Heirs of Promise the immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath: That by two immutable Things, in which it was impossible for God to lye, we might have a strong Consolation, Heb. 6. 17, 18.*

And in hopes being so strong, and so firmly grounded, there is no Temptation so alluring, nor Suffering so great, which he may not overcome in virtue of the same. *He that hath this Hope purifieth himself even as God is pure, 1 Joh. 3. 3,*

And he may, with St. Paul, be perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate him from the Love of God which is in Christ, Rom. 8. 38. 39.

But suppose a well-moralized Heathen could have a Certainty that God would Reward his Vertue, yet depending only upon the *Uncovenanted Goodness* of God; he could promise himself no greater measure of Happiness than what his good Deeds did of themselves deserve, which alas must fall vastly short of what is meant by the *Kingdom of Heaven*; since the best upon Examination will find themselves to have been but *unprofitable Servants*, Luke 17. 10. But a Christian, to whom God has Covenanted to make sure a Crown of Glory, may, without presumption, rely upon him to make good the same. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing,* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

And now to sum up those infinitely Gracious and invaluable Privileges made over to us on God's part in the Covenant of Grace; hereby we are made, First, *Members of Christ*, that is, are made Members of that Body of which Christ is the Head, (*viz.*) the Church; and so have together with a most excellent Body of Religion and Laws, all necessary Grace and Assistance conveyed and communicated to us, as Members from

from him the Head, to enliven, support and enable us in the Discharge of all those Religious Duties, and Christian Performances, requir'd at our hands.

The second Privilege is, that we are also hereby made **Children of God**; that is, having embrac'd Christianity, and being Incorporated into the Church of Christ, we are thereby Adopted, and Chosen out of the rest of the World, by God, to enjoy this grand Privilege of Sons, to have Pardon granted us, when with the Prodigal Son we return home to him our Offended, but Gracious Father, by Repentance. And we shall find him not over severe in respect of our lesser Failings, and the unavoidable Infirmities of our Nature; but shall always have him ready to hear our Prayers for Mercy, both in respect of our greater and lesser Transgressions.

And, lastly, the third Privilege you have been now told is this, That to compleat all, we are made **Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven**; that is, we have a Right and Title to the unspeakable Joys and Glories of Heaven secur'd to us; a Privilege which consider'd in it self is exceeding great, and as all the rest, if compar'd with what others enjoy, is a very singular one.

These now are the inestimable Privileges made over to us in the Covenant of Grace; Privileges, which as they are of infinite Advantage to us, so we shall never fail of obtaining them, if we will but take care to perform the Conditions requir'd on our Parts; and so, *First,*

renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pumps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. Secondly, on Condition we will believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith: And thirdly, obey God's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of our Lives. Which Conditions, what they are, and what they do import, I come next to declare unto you.

THE

IX. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pumps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the Sinful Lusts of the Flesh.

IN my Explication of these Words, *A Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, having given you to understand those inestimable Privileges made over to us on God's part, in the Covenant of Grace; I come now to do the same as to the Condition on ours, shewing you,*

First, What it is to Renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pumps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. In order to which,

1. I will shew you who the *Devil* is, and what are his *Works*, and what is meant by *Renouncing* the Devil and all his *Works*, and how absolutely necessary it is we should do so.

And First, by the *Devil*, is to be understood that wicked and infernal Spirit, who is chief of all the Enemies both of God and Man. He was once, as may be gathered from his Superiority to *Michael* the *Archangel*, who upon that Account durst not bring a railing Accusation against him, Jude 9. the highest Angel, the most glorious Spirit; but having himself revolted from God, and withdrawn many Legions of inferiour Angels into the same horrid Conspiracy with himself, he was banished Heaven into those dark Mansions of Sorrow, which we call Hell, there to be reserved unto the Judgment of the Great Day, Jude 6. But being a Prisoner at large, and being acted with a Spirit of Enmity to, and Revenge against the Glory of God, he afterwards withdrew Mankind also to joyn with him in his Rebellion; as may be seen in the History of *Adam's Fall*, Gen 3. And in process of time prevailed so far, till God's Authority was almost utterly banished from amongst Men, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by that time our Saviour came into the World, being dead in *Trespases* and *Sin*; wherein in time past they walked according to the Course of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience. Eph. 2. 1, 2. Whereupon, at last, the Son of God came into the World to recover Mankind from under the Dominion of Satan, as we read 1 Joh. 3. 8. The

Devil sinneth from the beginning ; and for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil. Which brings me,

2. To enquire what are the Works of the Devil ; And in general they appear ,
First, To be Sin.

Secondly, The tempting of us to Sin.

And the first general Work of the Devil is Sin : So the Apostle, 1 Joh. 3. 8. *The Devil sinneth from the beginning.* Now by Sin God's Authority is thrown off, his Government disown'd, and his Power defy'd. And therefore whosoever does wilfully sin, does strike against God's Authority ; for which cause no Sin should be made light of, much less the Subject of our Mirth and Laughter.

But there are some Sins which are more particularly the *Works of the Devil* ; namely, First, such as are more directly levelled against God's Authority, as Idolatry , Sorcery, Charming, Witchcraft, and Conjuring ; as also resorting to such as use those unlawful Arts. So also, secondly, are such as express more of the Devil's Temper than others ; as Pride, and Malice. And lastly, such as are more the Devil's Practicethan other Sins ; as Murther, Apostacy, Lying, or Evil-speaking. *The Devil was a Murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, because there is no truth in him ; when he speaketh a Lye, he speaketh of his own, for he is a Lyar, and the Father of it.* John 8. 44. And thus having seen who the Devil is, and secondly, what are his Works of Sin.

III. We are next to enquire what it is to Renounce the Devil, and all his Works of Sin, and how necessary it is we should do so. And

And as to the importance of the Word *Renounce*, when it is said we must *Renounce the Devil, and all his Works*; to *Renounce the Devil*, in the Sense of the Ancient Church, was to disclaim his usurp'd Dominion and Authority over Mankind. For the Devil, at the first rise of Christianity especially, having obtain'd a visible Kingdom, and in a manner an Universal Monarchy over Men; whence he is called the *Prince of the World*, John 14. 30. and the *God of this World*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. When therefore any were Converted from *Paganism to Christianity*, the Primitive Christians did expressly require from all that were admitted into that *Kingdom of God*, the Church of Christ, a publick and an open Renunciation, or Abjuration, of the Devil, or an utter Disowning and Abandoning the Devil's Authority, and the paying any Homage, Service, or Obedience to him, by Worshipping him, or his wicked Angels. And to *Renounce his Works of Sin*, was, in their Sense, to abandon and forsake every Sin, as being the proper Service of the Devil; and in the real meaning of it, no less than a throwing off God's Authority, and a disowning his Power. And that this was the primitive Sense and Meaning of Baptismal Renunciation, may be gather'd from Rom. 6 11. Where we shall see, that Christians being Baptiz'd, were to *reckon themselves to be dead unto Sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

And now if it be demanded, how far we are thus to Renounce and Disclaim both the Devil, and all his Works of Sin, we must *absolutely and entirely*
Renounce

Renounce both. For why? There is nothing but Evil proceeds from Satan, who is therefore by way of Eminence stiled the *wicked One*, *Mat. 13. 19.* And as to his Works of Sin, whether we consider Sin in *it self*, or in its *sad Effect and Consequents*, it is the utmost Evil. So that no Sin, or any thing the least of Sin, must willingly be complied with: For if a Man *keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.* *Jam. 2. 10.*

And indeed if the Nature of Satan, and of Sin, and the horrid Consequence of yielding to either, were well considered, it is hardly possible not *absolutely and entirely to Renounce both*: For as the Devil is the worst, and most dreadful, Being in the World; so *he that committeth Sin is of the Devil*, as we are told *1 Joh. 3. 8.* that is, he is of the Devil's Party, he is a Sharer in the Devil's Rebellion against God, and in his cursed Designs to destroy the Divine Authority. But however, whether People will consider it or no, so necessary it is that every Christian should *absolutely and intirely* renounce the Devil, and all his Works of Sin; that this, if you do not do, you will forfeit all your Right and Title to those infinite Blessings held forth to you in the Covenant of Grace, and purchased for you by the Blood of Christ. If you do not *entirely Renounce the Devil*, by having nothing to do with him, in his foul Rebellion against God, you will be accounted no *Members of Christ's Church*, but of the *Synagogue of Satan*; as the Apostazing *Gnosticks*, those great Enemies of God, are called, *Rev. 2. 9.* and that for their

Halting

Halting betwixt God and Satan. And except you do also *utterly renounce his Works of Sin*, by abandoning every known Sin, as that whereby the Divine Authority is thrown aside, and his Power disown'd, you will be so far from being *Children of God*, that you will be stil'd no better than the *Children of the Devil*: For *whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin*, as it is said 1 Joh. 3. 9. that is, Does keep himself strictly from all deliberate Sin. And in this the *Children of God are manifested*, and the *Children of the Devil*; *whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God*, as the Apostle goes on, ver. 10. And who else is it, think ye, but he who overcometh the Devil, and all his Works of Sin, that shall ever *Inherit the Kingdom of Heaven*? Why he, and none else, shall Inherit so inestimable a Blessing. We are assur'd, Rev. 21. 7, 8. *He that overcometh shall inherit all Things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son. But the Fearful, and Unbelieving, and Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Lyars, shall have their part in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death.* So necessary upon these several Accounts it is, that accordingly, as has been explain'd, you should *Renounce*, that is, Disclaim, Abhor, and Abandon the Devil, and all his Works of Sin; which that you may all of you do, God Almighty grant, of his infinite Mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE

X. LECTURE.

First, **That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works.**

I Have already shew'd you *who the Devil is*; that he is a Spirit, who Rebels against the Power and Authority of God: And I have also shew'd you, in part, *what are his Works*; principally his Works of Sin, whereby he has all along, and does still, continue to rebel against his Maker.

Secondly, And now I am to shew you, that as Sin, *so his tempting us to Sin, is another main and principal Work of the Devil*; and also *I shall shew you in what Sense, and how far, we must Renounce such his Temptations.*

Now to Tempt, is in the general Notion of the Word, *to make tryal of a Person*, and is a Thing either morally Good, or Evil, according to the End for which such a Tryal and Experiment is made. And if it be to prove a Man's Vertue, or to discover his Corruption; this is no more than what is consistent with the Justice, Wisdom, and Goodness of a Governor to do: For even God himself tempted *Abraham* to slay his Son *Isaac*, that so having try'd his Faith, he might Reward him for it, *Gen. 22. 2.* And

he also tempted or try'd *Hezekiah*, whether he would vainly and ostentatiously shew to the Ambassadors of *Babylon* his great Wealth; and this was done in order to discover to that Prince his own Hypocrisie and Corruption, and the Pride of his Heart, that so he might be humbled in the Sight and Sense thereof, *2 Chron.* 32. 31.

But now these Temptations of God are not such as we are to Renounce; but rather, if of the former kind, and in order to try our Faith, *We have reason to count it all Joy when we fall into them; knowing this, that the tryal of our Faith worketh Patience*, James 1, 2, 3. And if they are of the latter kind, and to discover our Corruption, they tend to make us better.

But as for those Temptations which are properly the *Works of the Devil*, there is quite a different End in them; and they are design'd meerly to enforce and ensnare a Person into some Sin, that so God may be affronted, his Government despis'd, and that his Anger being kindled, the Sinner may be punish'd for his Transgression. And because it is to this End that the Devil tempts us, he is therefore so frequently in the Scripture, particularly *Mat.* 4. 3. and *1 Thes.* 3. 5. stil'd the *Tempter*.

And since it does so infinitely concern us to know his Temptations, and in what Ways and Methods he usually prevails against Men, lest *Satan should get an Advantage over you*, I will reduce and consider them under these several Heads. First, *Such whereby he attempted the whole Race of Mankind, to draw them off from their*
Obe-

Obedience to God, to do Service to him. Secondly, Such as he Levels against the Church of Christ. Thirdly, Such as he Points against the most eminent Members in the Church. And, Fourthly, against any Persons indifferently, on purpose to draw them into Sin. And,

I. Let us consider his first and more general Temptations, those whereby he attempted the whole Race of Mankind, to draw them off from their Obedience to God to do Service to him. And the Means whereby he attempted the universal Rebellion of Mankind were,

1. By Insinuating into the Minds of Adam and Eve false Notions of God, and an ill Opinion of their Maker and Governor, particularly with respect to his Justice and Mercy: He insinuated, That it would have been an unjust Tyranny to give Men Appetites, and not Liberty to gratifie them with what they please; and therefore though Adam should transgress the Command of God, forbidding him to eat of the Forbidden Fruit, it might be presum'd the Divine Mercy would not permit God to punish the Sin, *Thou shalt not surely die*; Gen. 3. 4. But all such wrong Conceptions concerning the Justice and Mercy of God, as they are still too common, so they are to be look'd upon as the Suggestions of Satany, and are to be renounc'd accordingly.

2. And so must that next fatal Wile of his, whereby under the Pretence of enlarging our first Parents Knowledge of Good and Evil, Gen. 3. 5. by making an Experimental Knowledge of Sin, he brought Ignorance of Divine Things into his Understanding, from whence there could

cou'd issue out nothing but Ill. The Mind of Man naturally desires Knowledge ; but no sooner do we *experimentally* know Sin, but such filthy Screams of Lust fume up, as do cloud the Mind, so that it cannot perceive with so much quickness, as before, Divine and Spiritual Things : And even meer *curiosity* after less profitable Matters takes off from the Knowledge of God and our selves, and the Means of Happiness ; whence *not many wise Men after the Flesh are called*, 1 Cor. i. 26. And now the Devil, by thus encreasing sinful and useless Knowledge, having brought in an Ignorance of what is truly Good and Profitable to be known, to the Ruin of our first Parents in the beginning, and to the Destruction of many ever since : The making therefore an *experimental Knowledge* of Sin, as also *Curiosity* about less concerning Matters, is another of Satan's Politicks, which must be renounced and avoided by us.

3. Satan did in the beginning, and does to this day, inveigle the greatest part of Mankind into Sin, by *Bribing their Affections* with something that is nearest their Hearts ; and rather than disoblige, or lose which, they will commit any Thing that is Evil. Thus he tempted *Eve*, with the Fairness of the Forbidden Fruit ; and *Adam*, by the Solicitations of his Beloved Wife, Gen. 3. 6. And thus he does continue to ensnare us, by whatever we do place our Affections most upon : And therefore does our Saviour caution us in such unusual Terms, against loving too much our very nearest Relations ; telling us, *That if any one come to him, and*
hate

hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters; yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple, Luke 14. 26. that is, he would have us beware lest our fond Affection to them should withdraw us from God; and he would have us therefore bear such an Indifferency of Affection, even towards our very nearest Relations, as to be able to forsake them, and their Interests, rather than God.

4. The last of these more general Sort of Temptations, which Satan did spread before our first Parents, and does still before us, and that such a One as he might contrive the highest dishonour to God thereby, was his raising their Lusts and Appetites, by the Proposal of such Things as would gratifie them, to rebel against their Reason. Thus when the Woman saw that the Tree was good for Food, and that it was pleasant to the Eye, she took of the Fruit thereof, and did eat, Gen. 3. 6. And nothing could be contriv'd to reflect more dishonour upon God, than to have the most brutish Part of us gratified before him. But so it is, that by the very same Methods he does prevail to this day with the greatest part of Mankind to rebel against God: For Man being made up very much of Sense, so that nothing enters into the Soul but through the Door of our Senses, we are most of us easily prevail'd upon by what gratifies them, especially the Senses of Seeing and Tasting. But our being thus taken with outward Things, so as to disobey God for the sake of them, is so high an Ingratitude to our great Benefactor, who hath provided so much better

better for us, and such an Abuse to our own Souls, which are capable of relishing higher Enjoyments, as is not to be endur'd; and the Temptation therefore by those sensible things which will most gratifie our Appetites, must be *resisted* by us. And so much for the first sort of Satan's Temptations, those whereby he attempted the whole Race of Mankind, to draw them off from the Obedience of God, to do Service to him.

THE
XI. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works.

MY present Undertaking, is to lay open before you the Temptations of Satan; and in order thereunto, I have already shew'd you by what Temptations and Methods he overthrew the whole Race of Mankind, and drew it off from Obedience to God, to do Service to him. And now,

II. *I shall discover to you such as he levels against the Church of Christ, the true Servants of God, either witerly to destroy them from off the Face of the Earth, or at leastwise so to corrupt the Notions of God and Religion, that by*

their very Christianity they may dishonour Him.

And, in order to know this, we must consider, that no sooner had Satan seduc'd the whole Race of Mankind into a most unnatural and ungratseful Rebellion against their Maker, but God, out of his infinite Goodness, did recover to his Service a Body of Men, the Church, lifting them under the Seed of Woman, Jesus Christ, to Fight against Satan. And the Devil being enrag'd to have his Prey thus snatch'd out of his Teeth, continually Attacks it. And indeed,

His first and chief endeavours have been to destroy the Church of God from off the Face of the Earth. And this he endeavour'd to do by nipping it in the Bud, by the Murther of *Abel*, to slay whom he excited his Brother *Cain*. And when he fail'd in this, and the Church was afterwards recruited in the Family of *Seth*, yet he reduc'd it again by the bloody Posterity of *Cain* to eight Persons in the Days of *Noah*.

Nay, and when after the Flood, God chose *Abraham* and his Posterity, to be a special People unto himself, Satan did again endeavour utterly to extinguish them by his Servant *Pharaoh*. And indeed, in all Perods till our Saviours coming, he stirr'd up the Idolatrous Nations, their Neighbours, especial the four Monarchies, to harraßs them.

But when our Saviour Christ appeared in the World, then did he most yigourously exert his Malice against it; so that for the first 300 Years we hear of nothing but blood Persecutions

tions. The Emperors of *Rome*, true it is, were the Instruments, but Satan was the Instigator. And to this day, wheresoever any Attempt is made to Convert a Country from Paganism, he does instigate Princes and the People thereof to persecute and destroy the Preachers of the Gospel. Nor is he less Industrious to drive Christianity out of those Countries wherein it has gain'd possession. And even in the Bowels of Christendom, he has an Antichristian, and persecuting Party, most sadly weakning Christ's, and most effectually promoting the Interests of his own Kingdom; of which the whole Book of *Revelations* may serve for a Testimony. Thus does the Devil first attack the Church, by the most violent and furious Methods.

And now all Christians are so far to renounce Satan, with respect to those his Persecuting Temptations as to submit to the sorest Sufferings which he and his wicked Instruments can inflict, rather than deny Christ and his Truth; for this our Saviour has made the indispensable Condition of Salvation to all his Followers, *Matth. 16. 24. If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me.* But,

Secondly, When these bloody Members fail him, and instead of extinguishing Christianity, the Blood of the Martyrs proves the Seed of the Church: Then with all the Art and close Contrivance possible, does he endeavour to corrupt Mens Notions of God and Religion, so that by their very Christianity they may dishonour him.

These Politick Methods of his are discover'd to us, *Matth.* 13. 24. under the Parable of a malicious Enemy coming privately in the Night, and sowing Tares where the Husband-man had before sown good Seed. And Satan, like a skilful Husband-man himself, is exquisitely choise about the *Nature of the Seed, the Temper and Preparedness of the Soil, the Fitness of the Season, and the Skilfulness of the Seedsmen* which he does employ.

And, *First*, As to the *Nature of the Seed*, he takes care his Heretical Opinions and Practices should bear some resemblance of Divine Truth, that so he may the better conceal their discovery. And therefore he does gild his Errors where the Light of the Gospel does most clearly shine, as here amongst us, in this following Method; 1. Under the plausible appearance of advancing God's Honour in some of his Attributes, he endeavours to render him odious, and despis'd in others; as under the colour of advancing God's Power and Dominion, he makes him *absolutely to decree Mens Reprobation and Condemnation, to the Disparagement of the Divine Goodness and Mercy.*

2. It is usual with him, or his Agents, under the colour of advancing Gospel Truths, to propagate Heresies, which do undermine Religion, and the necessity of a Holy Life; as under the pretence of exalting Free Grace, to Preach down the necessity of our own Inherent Evangelical Righteousness.

3. Nothing is a more common Artifice of this Deceiver, than to exalt some eminent Chri-

Christian Duty, or some part of a Duty, or one way of performing a Duty to the disparagement of another; as to prefer Prayer to the neglect of Preaching, or Sermons to the contempt of Prayer. As also *Praying by the Spirit*, is by his subtilty made to juggle out *Bodily Worship*, and *Extemporary Prayer* is most fatally extol'd to the contempt of *Forms of Prayer*; by which means Satan has utterly defeated, and render'd useless to too many, both Families and Private Persons, as well as Publick Congregations, those excellent Helps of Devotion we have in our Church, and has brought in a total neglect in a manner, of Publick, Family, and of Private Prayers. Thus does Satan make choice of such *Tares* to sow in the Field as do nearly resemble the *pure Seed*. He cunningly gilds over, and disguise his Errors with something of a resemblance of Divine Truth, in order to prevent their Discovery.

Nor secondly, Is he less skilful in judging of the *preparedness of the Soil*; for in those Churches where the Scriptures are lock'd up, and Ignorance prevails, he imposes there the grossest Heresies as Articles of Faith; especially into such he introduces Idolatry, and Superstition, where by he is most directly and immediately serv'd.

Thirdly, And as to the *fitness of Seasons*, he is wonderfully dexterous in accommodating his Counsels, his Actions, and his manner of Acting to such Seasons as are most proper to his purpose of seducing Mankind. Hence in dark and ignorant Ages, nothing so common as the Apparition of Saints, as was pretended; and

under this shape he appeared in order to introduce the Belief of Purgatory, Image-Worship, and the like Superstition. And on the contrary in Learned and Philosophical Ages he is as shy in appearing, lest he should destroy the prevailing Saducism, which denies the Being of Spirits,

Fourthly, And as to the *skilfulness of the Seedsmen*, Satan is wonderfully cunning in making choice of fit and proper Instruments, and in furnishing those with the proper Arts of deceiving, and with suitable Qualities, whom he employs to sow the Seed of Corrupt Doctrine in the Souls of Men. This the Holy Spirit is particularly careful to inform us of, and to forewarn us against, especially 2 Cor. *xi. 14.* where the Apostle tells us, That *as Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light*, so that these Teachers, his Agents, who do infuse any of his false Doctrines into Mens Hearts, *are Deceitful Workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ*, v. 13. As for instance, such as place all Religion in *Morality*, shall be adorn'd with Humanity; and on the contrary, such as turn it all into *Mystery*, shall be gifted with Canting; and yet to see the crooked windings of this subtil Serpent, you shall often find that by Men of Godliness he will propagate such Principles as will open a way to a Flood of Immoralities, as is seen amongst the *Antinomians*. Thus does this great Deceiver with all the Art and close contrivance possible, endeavour to corrupt Mens Notions of God and Religion, so that by their very Christianity they may dishonour him.

And

And there is not a more difficult part in a Chriſtians Warfare than to preſerve ones ſelf untainted with Heretical Pravity, coloured over with the Varniſh of Goſpel-Truth. But the Cheat muſt be diſcovered, and Satan's Arts herein Reſiſted, and Renounced, for our Salvation depends upon it. *Beloved believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, whether they are of God, becauſe many falſe Propheſts are going out into the World,* 1 John 4. 1.

And the Scripture does give us two moſt inſallible, and ſufficient Rules whereby we may try theſe falſe Doctrines. The 1^{ſt} is *Matth. 1. 10. You ſhall know them by their Fruits*; that is, if the tendency of thoſe plauſible Doctrines be to encourage, and countenance Men in any ſin, they are undoubtedly falſe. The other Rule given us to this purpoſe, is, 1 John 4. 2, 3. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come into the Fleſh, is not of God.* By Jeſus Chriſt being come in the Fleſh, is meant, that Jeſus Chriſt took our Nature upon him, that he might be a *Mediator* betwixt God and us, to reconcile the Father to us, by his Satisfaction and Interceſſion for us. So that if there be any Doctrine which takes us off from our dependance upon the Mediation of Chriſt, for the acceptance of our imperfect Righteouſneſs, it is Falſe and Heretical.

And therefore from both thoſe Rules put together, you may conclude, that tho' Satans Agents ſeem never ſo Demure, and appear never ſo Sanctify'd, yet if they ſhall endeavour to

inſtil into your Minds any undue Apprehenſions of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, contrary to what you are taught out of the Scriptures in the Doctrine of our Churches; or any pernicious Opinions, which in their Nature and Tendency ſhall render a Holy, Good Life, unnecessary to our Juſtification: The Teachers, I ſay, of either of thoſe Doctrines, let them be never ſo plausible, you may aſſure your ſelves are no Miniſters of Chriſt, but of Satan; and are ſet on work by him, to deſtroy God's Authority amongſt Men, and to ſet up his own Throne in their Hearts; the things he aims at. And therefore *beware of theſe Wolves who come to you in Sheep's cloathing, you ſhall know them by their Fruits,* Matth. 7. 15, 16.

THE
XII. LECTURE.

First, That I ſhould Renounce the Devil, and all his Works.

- IN my laſt Diſcourſe, I laid before you ſuch Temptations of Satan as he levels againſt the Church of Chriſt, the true Servants of God, with a Deſign, either utterly to deſtroy them, or ſo to corrupt their Worſhip, that by their very Religion they might diſhonour their Maker.

III. I am now to shew, that next to his destroying of whole Churches, his great Industry is to gain over to his Party, or to tempt to some Grievous, and Scandalous Enormity, such Persons, as are more than ordinarily Eminent for their Rank or Quality, their Order, or their Piety in the Church of God.

First, Such as are most Eminent for their Rank or Quality. Hence Elymas the Sorcerer, that Child of the Devil, apply'd himself so diligently to Sergius Paulus, a Deputy, and great Man in his Countrey, to turn him from the Faith, Acts 13. 7, 8. And the Reason why Satan is so Industrious to get over the Honourable, and the Rich to his Party, is because such being Leading Men, if their Examples be bad, they are of Malignant Influence, because conspicuous: And because they will bring upon their Souls not only their guilt of their own, but also of other Mens sins; the Actions of Great Men having the force of a Precept, as well as of a Pattern, which Inferiours are afraid to shew their dislike of. So that it does infinitely concern Persons of Quality, of all Men living, utterly to Renounce the ways of sin, because their ill Examples are of such bad and malignant Influence upon others.

Secondly, The Devil is wonderfully Industrious to tempt into some Scandalous sin, or Wicked Course of Life; or at leastwise to invent and propagate some scandalous Story, against such as are Eminent on the Account of their Order, viz. the Ministers of Religion. And he is doubly enrag'd against such, both because

cause in the Nature and Design of their Office, they are to destroy his Kingdom; and because the rest of the World do altogether eye them for their Pattern. For this Reason no Temptation to draw such into some Scandalous Enormity shall be left untry'd by him. So our Saviour told his Disciples, *Behold Satan hath a desire to have you (you above all others) that he may sift you as Wheat*, Luke 22. 31. And the more Industrious a Minister of Religion is in doing good to the Souls of Men, the more Watchful is Satan to overcome such a one. Nay, and this Impostor will so order it, that in the very way a Minister of the Gospel may be most serviceable to the Church of God, he will render him most mischievous, as by turning his Zeal into Faction, his Spiritual-mindedness into Enthusiasm.

And to see the Malice of this Subtil Adversary, when with all his Wit, and Artifices, he cannot prevail over the Man of God, but that he is still baffled in all his Attempts upon him; then he sets his Agents, Slanderers, and Whisperers on work (for that *their Tongues are set on fire of Hell*, the Scripture tells us *James* 3. 6.) to invent and propagate Scandals concerning him.

He knows very well how much it concerns the Interest of Religion, that the Reputation of its Ministers be kept unsully'd, and that slanderous Reports lessen the Authority and Influence of the Clergy, almost as much as real sin; and therefore it is, that *Satan*, and *Satanical* Men are so Industrious to blast it; which *St. Paul* being aware of, charges *Timothy*, that *against an*
Elder

Elder, that is, against a Minister of Religion, *he should not receive an Accusation under two or three Witnesses*, 1 Tim. 5. 19. that is, that he should utterly discourage the Defamation of the Clergy.

Thirdly, The Devil is most incessantly busied to tempt to the Commission of some *Scandalous Enormity*, such as are signal for their extraordinary *Piety* and *Vertue*. Good Men the Devil knows will be grievously scandalized at such a ones fall. And the Atheistical will Triumph in it. And withal, Laps'd Person will be render'd almost uncapable ever after of Converting others by his Example, or Exhortations; (*excepting the matter of Uriah*, is to this day a Blot in *David's* Scutcheon.) Therefore against this Bulwark of Religion, the Devil draws up all his Artillery, as is seen in the Case of *Job*, Chap. 1. 2. and there is nothing he will so pride himself in, as in such a Conquest. The more exemplary therefore, and Pious any Man is, the more it concerns him to beware of *Satan*, and all his Temptations. Yet therefore, *Beloved*, seeing ye know these things before, beware, lest ye also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own stedfastness; but grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. 3. 17, 18. And so much for those Temptations which *Satan* our Adversary does more particularly level against such as are most considerable for their *Rank*, or *Quality*, their *Order*, or *Piety* in the Church of Christ.

THE

XIII. LECTURE.

First, **That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his works.**

HAVING in my last Discourse upon these words of the Catechism discovered to you how in a more especial manner Satan does level all his Temptations against such as are more peculiarly Eminent for their *Rank*, or their *Quality*, their *Order*, or their *Piety* in the Church of Christ; I am now,

IV. And lastly, *in order to a more full Display of that Work of the Devil, his tempting of us, to discover to you some of the more remarkable Temptations at leastwise, whereby he applys himself to all Persons indifferently considered, in the Church of Christ, be they high or low, to draw them into sin.*

The Devils Temptations are not easily known to be his, nor are they always distinguishable from those of the *World*, and the *Flesh*, which are manag'd and directed by him. However I shall undertake to discover some of the more considerable of Satan's Temptations of this last kind, under these following Characters. As,

First, He permits, if not furthers Persons in a partial Obedience to God in some particulars, the better to detain them perfect Slaves to him

in others; and therefore, when Men are thus partially Obedient, it is call'd a *Dividing betwixt God and Mammon*, Luke 16. 13. And there is not a more fatal Delusion of Satan's than this is, especially when the Partially Obedient exchange such sins of a Scandalous Name, such as Drunkenness and Lewdness, for their contrary Vertues, the Person becoming Chast and Sober, but notwithstanding, is possess'd with other Impieties of a higher Nature, such as Spiritual Pride, and a *Sacrilegious* pretence to Inspiration, as is daily seen in most of the Quakers. In this case it may be said, That the *Unclean Spirit went out of that Man, only to return into the House, from whence he went out, and to take with himself seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, that they entering in, and dwelling there, the last state of that Man might be worse than the first*, Matth. 12. 43, 44, 45. And there are not a more irreclaimable sort of sinners than these are.

Secondly, It is usual with him to put plausible Names upon the worst sins, and under that disguise, to cheat Persons into a good Opinion of them, and then to commit them. And thus he tempted even our *Saviour* to throw himself headlong from the top of the Temple, and would have this presumption thought a *trusting in God*, Matth. 4. 6. And most sins under this disguise, get Reputation amongst Men.

Thirdly, Nothing is a more usual Policy of his, than to change the Nature of several Divine Graces and Vertues, so that they degenerate into very great sins. This he does by transporting Persons out of the Moderation wherein Vertue

ture does for the most part consist, into that Excess which much resembles it, but is really very sinful and hurtful to Mens Souls. Thus the *Corinthians* Zeal against the sin of Incest, had like to have been heightened into an irreconcilableness to the sinner, which was call'd a *Device of Satans*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. And it is seldom that sins of this nature are ever repented of; for even when your Zealots, and Bigots do Murder and Persecute, they think they *do God good Service*, John 16. 2.

Fourthly, It is a most destructive Policy of Satans to put Novices and new Beginners in the Spiritual Life, upon undertaking Severities greater than they can go through with, on design that when they grow weary thereof, they may, together with their voluntary Severities, throw all Religion aside, as too burthensome, and not at all practicable. And that this is a Policy of Satans we may see, 1 Cor. 7. 5. And yet to see the crooked windings of this wily Serpent, as much as he is for screwing Persons up to Excess in Religion.

Fifthly, Satan by injecting evil thoughts into our Minds, to disorder and disturb our Devotions, is very industrious to unhallow, and spoil those Services whereby we shall really, and immediately, and directly Honour and Glorifie our Maker, and benefit our own Souls. Thus we read, Job 1. 6. That *when the Sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also amongst them*. And that in hearing the Word, he brings a drowsiness and inadvertency upon the Hearers, on purpose to hinder its Efficacy,

Efficacy, is seen, *Matth. 13. 19. When any one heareth the Word, and understandeth it not, or considers it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in the Heart.*

Sixthly, The Devil observing the outward wants and necessities of Persons is wont to tempt them to the use of unlawful and undue Means to remove those Evils. And that thus he tempted our Saviour you will see, *Matth. 4. 2, 3.* and would have him out of an impatience of waiting the ordinary Means of satisfying his hunger, to tempt God to feed him supernaturally, and by way of Miracle.

Seventhly, The Devil knowing every particular Persons inward Dispositions, both of Body and Mind, better many times than he himself does, he accordingly presents such Objects to the Fancy, as shall be likeliest to prevail over such a one, to commit some grievous sin. And hence no doubt it is, that Persons of a melancholly temper of Mind, are so apt above others, to be troubled with Blasphemous Thoughts, tho' Persons of great Piety, and are sometimes tempted to kill themselves. Both these apprehensions are some of those *fiery Darts of the wicked one, mentioned, Eph. 6. 16.* and are cast into the Soul at such times, when they are least able to repel them.

Eighthly, The great Battery of the Devil, whereby he does storm the Innocency, and shake the Constancy of the greatest part of Mankind, is his representing to the Fancies of Men, the Conveniency of Riches, the Glory of Honours, and the Sweetness of Pleasures, thereby to
bribe

bribe them to Rebel against God, and to sin against their own Souls. And thus, when he had fail'd in all other means, he tempted our Saviour; and when he found that this would not do, he then *left him*, Matth. 4. 9, 11. And such is Satans management here, that in his Representation of this World's Goods, he shews only the outside of those things to allure us into sin, industriously concealing all that is hurtful therein, which could deter men from it; and therefore,

Ninthly, When any have been once prevail'd upon by the Conveniency, the Beauty, the Honour, or the Pleasure of any of these outward things, which the Devil has represented to their Fancies, to commit sin to obtain them: Then he fails not to lay the Shame, and Disgrace of their sins before them, and will persuade them to commit another horrid wickedness, to hide from the Eyes of Men the shame of the former. All which Management of his, is seen in the case of *David* with *Uriah*, and his Wife *Bathsheba*, 2. Sam. 11. ch.

Tenthly, When he has once engag'd such a Person into many notorious Crimes, he will then either lull him into a fatal security, whereby he foolishly persuades himself, that God will deal more mercifully with him, than he has declared in his Word; or else Satan will not fail to present at last to such an enormous sinner's Conscience, the infinite Guilt and Horror of his Crimes, to make him, if he can, Despair that ever they will be forgiven, they are so many and monstrous: That so the sinner may never

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endeavour to repent, or so much as fly to God in Prayer, to have mercy on him. And now,

Lastly, There are a Sort of far-gone Sinners, whom God in Punishment does abandon over to the Devil, to be wholly in ~~la~~ manner ordered and acted by him. And these are of Three sorts.

First, Such ill-disposed Minds, as out of hatred to the ways of God, and out of love to their own Lusts, do endeavour to possess their Minds with such Principles; and do seek to themselves such Teachers, as will make Sin easy to their Consciences, and will reconcile the hopes of Heaven, and a bad Life together. As to such Men, *Because they receive not the Love of the Truth, that they may be saved*, God does threaten to send them strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lye. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11.

Secondly, There is a farther degree of this Sort of Sinners, who seem to be wholly abandon'd by God, and yielded up to Satan to be manag'd by him at his Pleasure; and they are such, who in a long Course of many Damning Sins, have lain waste the Conscience, have baffled at length all the Methods of his Grace to reclaim them, and have resisted and *Grieved his Holy Spirit* so long, till Grace be wholly withdrawn from them: And such are stiled *Children of Disobedience, in whom the Evil Spirit worketh*. Eph. 2. 3. And if there be any more abandon'd by God, and more under the Devil's Management than these, they must be,

Thirdly, Witches, Magicians, Conjurers, and the like, who have Covenanted away both Body

and Soul to the Devil, on condition he will be for some time at their beck, to execute their vile and malicious Purposes.

And thus I have at length, as before, shew'd you who the Devil is, and what are his Works of Sin, and how you are to Renounce both him and them: So I have now, in these last Discourses, laid before you those manifold Methods of Temptations, whereby he did and does still attempt, First, *The whole Race of Mankind*. Secondly, *The Church of Christ*. Thirdly, *The most Considerable and Leading Persons therein*. And lastly, *all Sorts of Persons indifferently consider'd*.

And upon the general View of the *Works of the Devil*, both of Sin and Temptation, it does appear, that his drift is no less than to usurp God's Throne, and to draw the whole Race of Mankind into the same cursed Rebellion with himself against the Majesty of Heaven.

And now it remains only to shew you, and then I shall have done with this Point, *What it is, and how we must renounce this great Work of the Devil, his tempting us to Sin*. And, in a word, the Temptations of Satan are then only properly Renounc'd, when they are Resisted by us; a Thing which we are commanded to do, *Jam. 4. 7. Resist the Devil*; as also *1 Pet. 5. 9. Whom resist stedfast in the Faith*.

And you shall be able effectually to resist his Temptations these Three ways,

First, By keeping your selves always Sober.

Secondly, By Watchfulness, that you may not be ensnared by them.

Thirdly, By Prayer to God, to protect you from them. And,

i. By

1. *By keeping your selves always Sober, that is, free both from Drunkenness and from Passion; or else you will be depriv'd of Reason, and the Grace of God, whereby alone you can resist them. Thus, 1 Pet. 5. 8. Be sober, because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour, whom resist stedfast in the Faith.*

2. *Watchfulness, is another Means to resist Satan's Temptations. Be sober, be vigilant, 1 Pet. 5. 9. He, for his part, is vigilant to do you Mischief, and watches all Advantages to get you into his Power and Reach; and it lies upon you to be as careful to guard your selves against all his Batteries, which he plays against you. And,*

3. *As your will secure you selves against the Temptations of the wicked one, you must constantly pray to God to protect you from them. Thus Jam. 4. 8. after we are commanded to resist the Devil, and he will fly from us; as an effectual way so to do, we are bid to draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to us; that is, if we will make our humble Addresses to God by Prayer, he will be ready to assist us against all his Temptations. In short, Since the Temptations of the wicked One are so many, and so subtil, it concerns you, according to the Advice of St. Paul, Eph. 6. 13, 18. to take unto you the whole Armour of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil Day, and having done all to stand. And especially to pray always, with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all Perseverance.*

THE
XIV. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; the Poms, and Vanity of this wicked World.

HAVING given you to understand the utmost of what is meant by *Renouncing the Devil and all his Works*.

Secondly, I am now in like manner to explain unto you, what is meant by the *Poms and Vanity of this wicked World*; and to shew you in what Sense, and how far, you must renounce the wicked World, with its Poms and Vanity.

To Renounce the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World. In which Words there being three Things necessary to be explain'd: First, The World. Secondly, The wicked World. And, Thirdly, The Poms and Vanity of this wicked World.

I. I am to shew you, what is meant by the World; and in what Sense, and how far, you are to renounce the World. And the World is to be consider'd both generally and particularly.

1. By the World in general, is meant that whole Frame of Nature which we behold, and all the Variety of Creatures which it contains,
and

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and it given us by the Bounty and Goodness of God for our Use and Benefit. Now the World, in this Sense, is not in itself Evil, but only accidentally, by Man's abuse of himself or it: Considered in itself, indeed, it is very good and convenient to us. *God saw every Thing that he had made, and behold it was very good,* Gen. 1. 31. And as it is not in itself absolutely Evil, so neither is it entirely to be renounced; but being Good in its self, it may in some measure be desired and enjoyed by us.

Nevertheless, through our own Corruption, whereby we abuse the *good Things of the World*, it becomes accidentally the Occasion of most of our Sins, and of our Estrangement from God our Sovereign Good. This it does by captivating our Affections, and by withdrawing us from God. So far therefore as it engages our Affections too closely to it, so as to make us inordinately and irregularly to mind it, and to neglect our great Concern, the business of Religion, it is to be renounced and resisted by us. *Love not the World, nor the Things of the World; if any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him,* 1 Joh. 15: 2.

So long indeed as we wear these earthly Bodies about us, we are permitted the Use and Enjoyment of worldly Goods, provided in Things lawful, and Degrees allowable: But being our Souls are the principal part of us, and are soon to remove to Heaven, we must chiefly set our Affections on Things above, and mainly

endeavour to attain them. And in this Sense St. Paul professes, *The World was Crucified unto him, and he unto the World*, Gal. 6. 14. And so much for *Renouncing the World* in general.

2. Let us next consider the World in its Particulars, and those Temptations which result both from the *Good* and the *Evils* thereof, as they are distinguished *Luke 16. 25*. And the *Good Things* of the World are summ'd up under these Heads; the *Riches*, *Honours*, and the *Pleasures* it affords: And its *Evils*, on the contrary, may be reduced to *Poverty*, *Disgrace*, and those *Afflictions* of all Sorts, which in innumerable ways do assail us. And there are also some Things therein of a *middle Nature*; as different *Callings*, *Conditions*, and *States of Life*, and also the *Cares* of this World, which are the Appurtenances to it, and afford great matter of Temptation and Tryal to us therein; and in what Sense, and how far, you are to *Renounce* it, with reference to each of these, I will endeavour to shew you. And,

First, If we consider the *Riches* of this World, these are not in themselves hurtful, but good and Convenient, and are bestowed on us by God to many good Ends and Purposes; and those who enjoy them have great Advantages of doing Good therewith, to others Comfort, and the Benefit of their own Souls. Nevertheless *Riches* are a mighty Temptation, whether we consider Men as *Getting*, *Possessing*, or as *Parting* with, or *Losing* them.

And 1. In the over-eager pursuit and *Getting* of Riches, Men do run themselves into many

many grievous Sins, as also into many miserable Snares, so as to be hardly ever able to disentangle themselves out of them. For as *Restitution* of ill-gotten Wealth is necessary to having Peace with God; so it is extreamly difficult to be willing, or able, afterwards to make it. Indeed, *They that will be Rich, who resolve right or wrong to be Rich, fall into Temptations, and a Snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Destruction,* 1 Tim. 6. 9.

2. And no less Temptations are those subject to, who do *possess* Riches: Experience telling us, that a great Estate is a very great Temptation to Idleness and Luxury, to Pride and Insolence, to Irreligion towards God, and a prophane idolatrous Trust in Riches; and, in a word, to commit the highest Offence towards God, their Neighbours, and themselves. *In my Prosperity I said I shall never be removed:* Holy David confesses it of himself, *Psal. 30. 6.* But,

3. The great Sins of of all are occasion'd by a *Loathness to part with, and a Fear of losing our Riches.* From a Loathness to part with Riches, arises unmercifulness to Men; as was seen in the Case of *Dives*, who would spare no more than *the Crums which fell from his Table*, Luke 16. 21. to relieve the poor *Lazarus*, his Heart was so much set upon on his Wealth. From the *Fear of losing them*, Men become Guilty of no less than *Apostacy* from God, and a Denial of the Truth, as is seen in the Case of the young Man in the Gospel, *Matth. 19. 21, 22.* who

when he heard, that if he would be Christ's Disciple, *he must leave all he had*, as the Case then stood, and does often in Times of Persecution ever since, *He went away sorrowful, for he had great Possessions*. Thus you see what great Temptations Riches will give you; whether you consider your selves in the *Getting, Possessing*, or as *Parting with, or Losing of them*.

And now the great Question will be, *In what Sense, and how far, Riches are to be renounc'd in all these respects?* And in general, being they are not Evil in themselves, they are in those Cases only to be renounced by us, wherein we cannot without Sin, *Pursue, Possess, and Enjoy* them.

As, *First*, if we consider Riches in the *Getting*, no Man must so put his Heart upon them, as to esteem them his chiefest Good and Happiness, for this God alone is; and he will not endure the Riches of this World should be made a Competitor with him for our Service. *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*, says our Saviour, *Matth. 6. 24*

Nor must we labour after Riches with immoderate Care, so as to neglect the great Duties of Religion and Devotion; but *must seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness*, *Matth. 6. 33*. Especially you must beware of enriching your selves by any unjust Means; such as Oppression, Wrong, Robbery, or Sacriledg. *Wo be to him that buildeth his House by Unrighteousness, and his Chambers by Wrong; that useth his Neighbour's, Service without Wages, and*
giveth

giveth him not for his Work, Jer. 22. 13. And whoever has unjustly gained any Thing, must Renounce it, by making *Restitution* thereof; as good *Zaccheus* did; Behold, Lord, if I have taken any Thing from any Man, by false *Accusation*, I here restore him fourfold. Luke 19. 8.

Secondly, Riches, if consider'd in the *Possession*, are to be Renounc'd, by paring off those Superfluities which tempt to Idleness and Luxury, to Pride and Insolence, and an Idolatrous Trust in Riches, and by bestowing them to Pious and Charitable Use. Nor is this a more hard and unreasonable Lesson, than what was given by our Saviour in a like Case, *Matth. 5. 29. If thy right Eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: For it is profitable for thee that one of thy Members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.* So we may say in this, It is much better to part with Superfluities, than to be Damn'd for them; and the giving of them to Pious and Charitable Uses, is that which is called, *Making Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness.* Luke 16. 9.

Lastly, And it remains now only to be considered, how far the Rich are to Renounce their Wealth, in parting with it in Works of Mercy, and in suffering the Loss thereof, rather than incur Apostacy. And, in a word, at all times Rich Men ought to make to themselves *Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness*, Luke 16. 9. by giving to Pious and Charitable Uses: And in Times of Suffering, they who have never so much, as they will be *Christ's Disciples* and Followers, must deny themselves, and take

up their Cross and follow him; that is, forsake all for his sake, Matth 16. 24. And alas why should any Man, though the Richest upon Earth, stick at doing this: For what shall it profit him, if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul; or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul? Ver. 26.

THE XV. LECTURE.

*First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, **The Dumps and Vanity of this wicked world.***

THE Subject of our present Consideration, is the *Renouncing of the World*; and I have already shew'd you in what Sense, and how far, we must *Renounce the World* in General; as also that first and principal of its Parts, the *Riches of the World*.

Secondly, I am now to speak to another of its Particulars, the Honours of it; and to shew you what they mean, and in what Sense, and how far, you are to Renounce the Honours of the World.

Honour strictly signifies an inward Esteem, signified by an outward Respect. But in common Language, by Honours are meant the Advan-
tages

tages or Qualities themſelves; upon the account of which, Perſons are ſo Honour'd, and thoſe outward Reſpects given them, in regard to thoſe Advantages.

And they may be reduced to theſe; *Nobility, Prebeminence, Reputation, Applauſe*, and ſuch outward Reſpects, as are given upon the Account of any of theſe.

And I. Let us conſider *Nobility* or *Gentility*, and in what Senſe, and how far, it is at any time to be *Renounced* by us. This is an Honour deriv'd from worthy Anceſtors, and has uſually certain Titles and Badges, which diſtinguiſh ſuch Perſons from the Crowd of Men: And ſuch Diſtinctions in the Body Politick is both allowable and uſeful; as may be ſeen, I *Cor.* 12. 23. only there are very great Abuſes which this kind of Honour is ſubject to, and in ſuch Inſtances it is to be *Renounced*.
As,

First, A *Gentleman*, or *Nobleman*, be he of what Rank or Quality ſoever, muſt utterly *Renounce* all that Honour which pretends to put him above the Laws of God or Man; and beyond Reproof or Punishment, when he has violated either: Nay, but on the contrary, ſuch a One is bound above others to be a ſtrict and orderly Liver, and upon his Failure lies more open to the Reproof of the Miniſters of God here, and provokes more than others the Punishment of an incenſed Deity hereafter. And accordingly *Herod the Tetrach* was reproved by *John the Baptiſt*, for *Herodias* his Brother *Philips* Wife, and for the Evils which *Herod* had done.

Luke

Luke 3. 19. And in the World to come, such a one, as having *received much*, will, above all others, be *beaten with many Stripes*, Luke 12. 47.

Secondly, And that *Nobility*, or *Gentility*, is also to be *renounced* and detested, which exalts Persons above their Brethren, to that degree, as to make them Despise and Oppress the rest of Mankind; if these were but a Lower Rank of Creatures, and had not the same God to their Father, Bodies formed out of the same Clay, and Souls as excellent in their Natures, and as capable of Improvements; as precious in God's Sights, and as much the Heirs of Heaven as their own. And let the Proud ones know, that their is no ground in the World for that mighty Distance, much less for that miserable Slavery which some of them put their Fellow-Creatures to; for *have we not one Father, and hath not one God created us*, Mal. 2. 10. But,

Thirdly, Those Persons ought indeed even to *Renounce* all Pretensions to Honour, who have basely degenerated from those worthy Qualities which enobled their Ancestors. *We have Abraham to our Father*, was the constant cry of the Jews, when they had least of the Faith and Vertues of *Abraham*. But what says St. John Baptist, *Think not to say within your Hearts, we have Abraham to our Father; for I say unto you, that God is able out of these Stones to raise up Children unto Abraham*, Matth. 3. 9. that is, by having degenerated from *Abraham*, you have forfeited your Title to the Name and Honour of being

being *Abraham's Children*; and the vile *Gentiles*, as you account them, shall be taken into that Dignity and Relation in your stead.

Fourthly, But especially such ought to *Renounce* even all Pretensions to Honour amongst Christians, at leastwise who despise Religion and its chiefest Vertues, as Qualities beneath them; which because so many do, *Not many Mighty, not many Noble, are called*, 1 Cor. 1. 26. So that though such are accounted Honourable, and may be never so much respected by vain Men, they are really despicable doth in the sight of God, and all wise Persons. And thus you see how far *Paternal Honour* is to be Renounced.

II. Let us next enquire, in what Sense, and how far, *Civil Honour* is to be Renounced; whether the Favour of Princes, or the Effects of their Favour, Posts of Honour, which indeed are darling and bewitching Things, and betray many into very great Crimes. But,

First, A Prince's Favour, through extreamly valuable in itself, when it can be obtain'd and preserv'd without Sin; yet no Man must either Gain, Possess, or Retain it by wicked Arts, or sinful Compliances: But, like good *Obadiab*, must take care to be one that *Fears God* in a wicked Prince's Court, 1 King. 18. 3. Nor,

Secondly, As to the Effects of these Favours, High-Places, and Titles of Honour, ought any Man to grasp at that which is above his Capacity, and Ability to manage to the Publick Good; An Ambition which is mischievous both to the Church and State. Instead of which, every Man ought to think *soberly of himself, according*
as

as God has dealt to every Man his Measure of Faith. Rom. 12. 3. Nor,

Thirdly, Ought Persons of the best Capacities, and greatest Abilities, be over eager and importunate in their Suits and Applications to those who bestow them: Especially none, though of the greatest Capacities, must violently thrust themselves into them, to the disturbance of the Church or State, *lest they perish in the Gaming of Korah*, Numb. 16. Jude 11. for their factiously grasping at undue Places.

III. There is another sort of Honour, consisting in the *high Esteem and Reputation* in which the wise and vertuous part of Mankind have a Person, occasion'd by the excellent Gifts and Qualities, and Divine Graces shining in him, or upon the account of some extraordinary Actions perform'd by him. This is what the Wise-man calls a *Good Name*, and is more valuable than Riches, or Gold, or Silver, Prov. 22. 1. And indeed it is not only a more peculiar Blessing than any the greatest Treasures; but procures greater Security to our Persons and Estates. So that whereas in Dearth and Famines, Persecutions and Invasions, the more Wealthy any Man is, the more he is the object of Envy, and subject to Rapine and Violence; the very Reputation of Uprightness and Integrity, Goodness, Mercy, and Charity, will be a safe Retreat and Shield against the Storm.

What shall I say? A good Name is a Treasury that must be preserv'd by Men in Holy Orders, 1 Tim. 3. 7. and for the like Reason, by all others in any publick Station For why?

why? It is not only comfortable to ones own self, and smells, like Oinment, sweet in the World; but what is chiefly to be regarded, it renders a Person capable of doing good in it. *Because I delivered the Poor when he cryed, and the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him; unto me Men gave Ear, and waited, and kept silence at my Counsel.* Job 29. 12. And therefore a desire of Reputation and Credit is not only a Thing implanted in our Natures by God; but to preserve it untainted and unsuspected of Evil, is a Duty enjoin'd upon us by his Laws. *Be blameless, ye Sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, amongst whom shine ye as Lights in the World.* Phil. 2. 15. So valuable is a good Reputation in itself, so desirable to be attain'd, and so carefully to be preserv'd. And yet even Esteem and Reputation itself, as well as the Temptations it gives us, is to be Renounc'd by us.

As, *First*, we must so far Renounce the Honour that shall accrue to us from our own good Works, as not to make our own Glory the End and Reason of any Good we do: For that we are bid to *let our Light shine before Men*, the Reason of it is this, *that others seeing our good Works, may Glorify our Father which is in Heaven.* Matth. 5. 16.

Secondly, We must not *Affect*, but *Renounce* those Praises which are above our Deserts; or we must not be desirous of *Vain-glory.* Gal. 5. 26.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We must beware of taking the Honour and Respects given us for any worthy Performances wholly to our selves; and of not transferring them to God, to whom the Glory of all that is good in us does properly belong. *Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy Name be the Praise.* Psal. 115. 1.

Fourthly, We must abhor making a Reputation for Religion an Instrument only to our wordly Advancement. *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for ye devour Widows Houses, and for a Pretence make long Prayers, therefore ye shall receive the greater Damnation.* Mat. 23. 14. But, on the contrary, you must use the Authority your, Credit shall give your to discountenance Vice, and to encourage Vertue, in the World.

Fifthly, As valuable as is a good Name, and Reputation amongst Men; we must Renounce all undue Means of preserving it; such as are *Duelling* upon the account of Affronts, as is usual amongst the great Ones; and going to Law for Slanders, as is frequent amongst common People. *Now therefore there is utterly a Fault amongst you, because ye go to Law one with another, why do you not rather take Wrong?* 1 Cor. 6. 7.

And, *lastly*, we must utterly Renounce and Forfeit the Esteem of Men, rather than incur the Disfavour of God: For as it will often happen, that you shall be evil spoken of for well-doing; so when it does, you are to account it a Blessing, *when men shall revile you, and speak all manner of evil against you for Christ's sake*, and for adhering stoutly to the Rules

Rules of his Gospel ; *for great will be your Reward in Heaven*, Matt. 5. 11, 12.

IV. Next to that high Esteem and Reputation, in which the Virtuous and the Wise shall hold you, upon the account of well-doing, it deserves to be considered, how far that Honour is to be *Renounc'd*, which consists in the *Applauses of the Vulgar*, upon what they may account Praise-worthy and Honourable ; such as insolent Swaggering, Swearing, Drinking, Whoring, and the like : And in a word, this sort of Honour is utterly, and with all possible Indignation to be renounced ; for in such Cases, and with respect to such Practices as these, it is said, *Woe unto those of whom all Men shall speak well*, Luke 6. 26.

V. And lastly, It now remains only that I instruct you in what Sense, and how far we must *Renounce* those *Outward Expressions of Respect*, either by Word, or Deed, which are usually given upon the account of any of the fore-mentioned Honours. And,

First, No Created Being, either Men or Angels, must suffer those Respects to be given them, whether by Word or Deed, which are proper and peculiar to signify our Sense of God's Majesty and Perfections, remembring how the Angel refused Divine Worship, when it was offered to him by *John*, Rev. 22. 9. And young Women would do well to take care that they *Renounce* with the utmost Detestation those *Blasphemous Compliments*, whereby *Divine Perfections* are usually ascrib'd to them by their vain Lovers, remembring how signally *Herod* was

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punished by the hand of God for suffering himself to be so flatter'd, *Acts 12, 21, 22, 23.*

Secondly, All Persons must renounce, and refuse those Titles and Respects, and Precedences, which are not their due, but belong to those above them. *There is an Evil which I have seen under the Sun*, says Solomon, *Eccl. 10. 5, 6. viz. Folly sit in great Dignity, and the Rich sit in low Places.* And,

Lastly, It becomes all Persons in Modesty, and Humility, and good Manners, to *decline* in some measure, even their due Respects. And they must ever *Renounce* the Entitling, and the placing themselves in the *highest Rooms*; for this is commanded, *Luke 14. 8, 9, 10, 11.* as a necessary and becoming piece of Christian Modesty.

T H E

XVI. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; *The Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World.*

HAVING already consider'd the *Riches*, and the *Honours* of this World, and how far we are to *Renounce* either of them.

Thirdly, I am next to take into Consideration, the *Pleasures* of it, and to shew you in what Sense, and how far you are also to *Renounce* them.

Now

Now Pleasure is the Satisfaction and Delight which any part of our Nature perceives, when its Appetites are gratify'd with what it desires. And answerable to the several Capacities of our Nature, there are Rational, Sensitive, Sensual, and Recreative Pleasures; of which in their Order. And,

I. As to Rational Pleasure. This is that high Satisfaction and sweet Delight which the Soul perceives, when it finds it self improve in Knowledge, or in Vertue; or when it reflects upon the good it has done: And a most Excellent and Divine Pleasure this is; and yet there is room for Renunciation even with respect to this. For,

First, No Man must make the end of his Knowledge to be the meer pleasure of Knowing; that is, we must not seek after Knowledge, purely for Knowledge-sake, and not for the Use and Instruction of our selves and others. And therefore it is required of a Bishop, whose Knowledge is suppos'd to exceed other Mens, that he be apt to teach, 1 Tim. 3. 2. Nor,

Secondly, Must that Satisfaction and Delight which arises from the Sense, and Conscience of good and worthy Deeds, be so much because we are admir'd and applauded for them, as because they are pleasing to God: For whatever good we do, if it be to the end we may be seen of Men, we shall have no Reward of our Father which is in Heaven, Matt. 6. 1.

II. Sensitive Pleasure, is when the Animal Life, or the Bodily Senses, are gratify'd with those Objects which are agreeable to them; and this it

is lawful to do; as may be seen, *Eccles. 5. 18.* till such time as they be come,

III. *Sensual*, and that they will degenerate into, and must therefore be *Renounc'd* in these Cases following.

First, When we shall prefer the Pleasures of Sense, as Eating, Drinking, and the like, in our Judgments and Desires, either before our Joy in God, or the eternal Enjoyments of his Kingdom; whereas, on the contrary, with the Holy *Psalmist*, we must be able experimentally to say, *The Fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the Judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than Gold, yea, than much fine Gold; sweeter also than Honey and the Honey-comb, Psal. 19. 9, 10.*

Secondly, We must Renounce it as a great sign of a *Sensual Spirit*, which relishes no Enjoyments like those of Sense; when a Person may be observ'd to be wholly in a manner purveying for the Belly. *Do ye not yet understand, that whatever entereth into the Mouth, goeth into the Belly, and is cast out into the draught? Mat. 15. 17.*

Thirdly, It must be Renounc'd as an high and sinful piece of Sensuality, to glut our Senses, so as to *Surfeit* on these Sweets. And this, not only because it is most sinful in it self, but because such *Sensuality* is the Parent and Cause of the most violent and outrageous Wickednesses that are otherwise committed amongst Men, as may be seen, *Jer. 5, 7, 8.*

Fourthly, The Deliciousness of *Sensitive Pleasures* must not cause any one to load and burthen his Nature therewith, so as to render himself unfit

unfit for the Duties of his Calling and Religion: For the only lawful end of all *Pleasures* in general, as well as of *Recreations* in particular, is to render us not useless, but more vigorous and lively in the Service of God, and the proper business of our Calling: Which brings me,

IV. To consider *Recreative Pleasures*, and to shew you what they are, and in what sense, and how far we are to renounce those sorts of Pleasures. Now, *Recreations* are Diversions of the Mind or Body from serious Business and Employment, and being Pleasures of a middle nature, neither Good nor Evil in themselves, they are not absolutely to be *Renounc'd* by a Christian. But you must know that the most innocent *Recreations* are to be very moderately and sparingly us'd by every Disciple of Christ, because *every one who will come after him, must deny himself*, Mat. 16. 24. And indeed, whoever aims at Perfection, must sometimes use Severity, in order to mortifie the corrupt Nature. Nor may those of any Quality think themselves excepted from such Restraints as will not be a little uneasie to Flesh and Blood.

And thus having at length finished all that I think necessary to be said concerning Renouncing either the *World* in general, or those particular *Good Things* into which it is divided, viz. the *Riches, Honours, and the Pleasures* of it.

Secondly, I am next to consider the *Evils* of the *World*, viz. *Poverty, Disgrace, and Afflictions*, and how far, and in what Sense, we must *Renounce* them. And,

I. As to *Poverty* and *Afflictions*, tho' instead of Temptations to Sin, and Hindrances to

Vertue, these do very often prove Mortifiers of Vice, and the great Occasion of a Holy Life, yet they are often great Temptations to many Sins and Impieties. And therefore with reference to them,

First, It behoves those who labour under Poverty, or any kind of *Affliction*, to beware of Impatience and Discontent, considering, that *whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth*, Heb. 12. 6.

Secondly, Those who are cast into the worst of Circumstances, must beware of Envyng the outward Felicity of the Wicked; *Fret not thy self against the Evil Doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of Iniquity*, Psal. 37. 1.

Thirdly, A Person that is poor, must be infinitely careful, lest to rescue himself out of it, he be tempted to *Fraud*, especially not to Stealing, or Purloining, but must resolve with *Job*, tho' stript naked of all, *Not to remove his Integrity from him*, Job. 27. 5, 6.

Fourthly, Persons must not think, that because they are poor, they are ever the more disengag'd from the Service of God, and from their *Attendance* upon Him in all the parts of Divine Worship, remembering that our Saviour apply'd himself particularly to them: *The Poor have the Gospel preached unto them*, Matt. 11. 5.

II. The last of this World's Evils is *Disgrace*, and so great a Temptation it is, and Discouragement to do good, that it made *Nicodemus* come to our Saviour by Night, *John* 3. 1, 2. But this we must despise, considering, that *Whosoever is ashamed of Christ before Men, of him will the Son of Man*

Man be asham'd, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the Holy Angels, Mark 8. 38. And thus, having considered both the *World* in general, and the *Good* and *Evils* of it in particular; it only remains, that I do the like,

Thirdly, and *lastly*, concerning some things therein of a *middle Nature*, viz. the *Callings*, *Conditions* of Life, and the *Cares* of this *World*. And,

I. Let us consider the *Callings* of the *World*, and how the *Temptations* which they give us are to be *Renounc'd*. And it is requisite in the first place to consider, that every Man is to betake himself to some *Business*; and his *Calling* must be such as *Providence* has fitted him with *Abilities* for: And for whatsoever *Calling* his peculiar *Abilities* do fit him, to that he is to look upon himself as preparatively call'd, or appointed to by God; and the *lawful Authority* in Church or State is that which must determine his *Call*. And then being thus appointed to his *Calling*, he must employ himself therein to God's Glory, and his own and the *Publick* Good. And now the Question will be, What is to be *Renounc'd* with respect to the *Callings* of this *World*? And,

First, All Men must *Renounce* all such *Callings* and *Professions* as are directly sinful and wicked, a thing so evident in it self, as to need no proof. And,

Secondly, All such *Callings* also as tend to the Hurt, not the Good of the *Publick*; and consequently, nothing ought to be took up as a

Calling, which impoverishes or corrupts the Manners of a People.

Thirdly, Christians must *Renounce* all those wicked Arts, whereby some do abuse the most worthy and useful *Callings*, unjustly to serve their Worldly Ends. And indeed, as every *Calling* has its particular Temptations belonging to it; so, what is worse, most Men think they may innocently enough comply with sinful Methods of Gain therein, and they think it a necessary part of their Profession so to do. But if *Esaú* stands upon Record for a Foolish, as well as a Prophane Person, who in extremity of Hunger Sold his Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage, Gen. 25. 33, 34. What is that Christian, who shall sell his *Eternal Inheritance* for a thing in comparison of no Value?

Fourthly, All *Levity*, and *Desultory Skipping* from one *Calling* to another is to be *Renounc'd*, according to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. 20. *Let every Man abide in the same Calling wherein he was called*. But above all, that change of *Callings* is to be renounc'd, as the highest Prophanenels, where *Laymen* and *Tradesmen*, nay, *Women*, as amongst the *Quakers*, so expressly contrary to the Commands of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 14. 34. do *Sacrilegiously Usurp* the *Sacred Office* of the *Ministry*, and set up for Teachers, without a lawful Call, or Ordination thereunto. Which brings me,

Fifthly, To shew that any *Calling* whatsoever, is to be declin'd, for which a Person is not qualify'd both by Education, Ability, Inclination, and Legal Appointment. Especially *Callings* of high

high Importance, such as the *Ministry*, must be declin'd till all those Qualities and Qualifications concurr, which are requisite thereunto, lest the Pretenders to it fall under the same Rebuke with those, who *desiring to be Teachers, understood neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed*, 1 Tim. 1. 7.

Sixthly, *Idleness* in any *Calling* is to be *Renounc'd*: *Whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with all thy Might*, Eccl. 9. 10. Nor is *Idleness* allowable even in the *Gentleman* himself, as being one of the greatest Temptations that is to Sin, and in it self a very great Sin; the Idle Person, especially if one of Quality and Fortunes in the World, being one that has Powers given him, but *hides his Talents in the Earth*, Matth. 25. 25. And *Lastly*, No Man must live above his *Calling*, as that which exposes to many Temptations, and often leads Men into the most sinful Courses. The

II. Amongst those things of the World of a *middle Nature*, which are to be consider'd, are the different *Conditions and States of Men* therein. And the greatest part of Mankind are in the State either of *Masters*, or *Servants*. And the whole World are either *Single* or *Married Persons*. And,

1. As to the State and Condition of a *Master*. He is one who has great Advantages of doing Good. But all that Dominion is to be *utterly Renounc'd* amongst Christians, which treats *Servants* no better than *Slaves* and *Beasts*, *Knowing that both have a Master in Heaven, with whom there is no respect of Persons*, Eph. 6. 9.

2. As to the State of *Servitude*, it is not in it self unhappy; only, *first*, it concerns those who are to live by a Service, to renounce and refuse such Services as are a State of shrew'd Temptations, where a great deal of Wickedness is practis'd without controul, and little of the Fear of God is to be seen amongst Masters and Servants. And, *Secondly*, If a Servant happen into an Irreligious Family, he must put on a stedfast Resolution, as *Joseph* in the House of *Potiphar*, *Gen.* 39. 8. to preserve his Innocence.

3. The next State, and that wherein the greatest part of Mankind in this World are found, is the State of *Celibacy*, or the single Life. And this, tho' it is advantageous to Devotion, and is safest in times of Distress, yet even this State must be *Renounc'd*, and forsaken by those who cannot contain, according to the Advice of the Apostle, *1 Cor.* 7. 9. And,

4. In the *Married State*, which is ordained by God, *Match.* 19. 4. *First*, All Solicitations from either of the Married Couple must be *Renounc'd*, whereby they would perswade either the other against the Discharge of any Christian Duty, or to the Commission of any Sin. And, *Secondly*, Even in the *Married State* all those *Worldly Cares* which choak up, or disturb Devotion, must be utterly laid aside, as will be shew'd under the next. And,

Last of those things pertaining to the World, which afford great Matter of Temptation to us, *viz.* The Cares thereof. These are indeed in some measure necessary, and we are

not to be Slothful in Business, Rom. 12. 11. But, *First*, It concerns Christians to Renounce that Multiplicity of Worldly Cares which distract their Thoughts, and shew them to have no other Aim but at this World. And, *Secondly*, It behoves us so far to Renounce any Worldly Care, as it does alienate our Affections from God and Heavenly Things, and does withdraw our Attention from him in the Services we are bound to pay him, remembering how *Martha* was chid by our Saviour for cumbring her self too much with such Cares, to the hind'ring of her Attention to our Saviour's Discourses, *Luke* 10. 40, 41, 42. And indeed, *Lastly*, All Persons whatsoever, whether more or less engag'd in worldly Cares, when grown in Years, should wholly, in a manner, throw them off; and retiring as much as may be from the World, should employ the remainder of their Time in clearing their Accounts with God and Man; and in preparing themselves for the Tryal of the great Day. To whom particularly may be apply'd the Advice of the Prophet; *See thy House in order, for thou shalt die, and not live*, 2 King. 20. 1.



THE

XVII LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, The Poms and Vanities of this wicked World.

I Have at last explain'd, and shew'd you how far, and in what sense, you are to *Renounce the World*. And now,

Secondly, I am to give you a Survey likewise of the *wicked World*, and to shew you in what sense, and how far you are to *Renounce the wicked World*.

Now, by the *wicked World* can properly be meant no other than *wicked Men*, there being no Creature upon Earth, besides Man, that is capable of doing any thing morally Good or Evil, so as to be stil'd from the latter, *Wicked*. Nor it is every Sinner, who, in the Language of the Scripture, or in common Account, may be call'd a *wicked Man*: But it must be some one of a more than ordinary Impiety, so as to approach something near to Satan himself in Sin and Wickedness, who can deserve so black a Character. Now, the Devil is often term'd the *wicked One*; and particularly, *Matth. 13. 19.* he is so stil'd upon the Account of his *Tempting others to Sin*. And upon the same account there-

therefore, those do more peculiarly deserve the Character of *wicked Men*, who are not only Guilty of notorious Crimes themselves, but make it a part of their business to Corrupt, and Tempt others to Sin.

And now you must *heartily Renounce*, and refuse to conform your selves to those wicked Men, either, *First*, By becoming Tempters your selves of other People. Or, *Secondly*, By yielding of your selves to be overcome by other Mens Temptations. And,

I. You must Renounce that *Diabolical Wickedness* of becoming Tempters your selves of other Persons. Renounce, do I say? You must Abhor, Abominate, and Detest this their Wickedness of Corrupting others, and of Tempting them to Sin, as being a Practice which of all others will render you likest the Devil; and such a Wretch will find himself treated with unusual Indignation and Language upon that Account, as may be seen *Acts* 13. 8, 9, 10.

And indeed, it must bring a dreadful Guilt upon that Man, who shall be found an Instrument of anothers Damnation: It being an Injury to Mens Souls, in some Cases hardly ever, in others impossible to be repair'd. These Tempters are the Persons by whom Offences come. And what says our Saviour to such? *Who so shall Offend one of these Little Ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a Millstone were hanged about his Neck, and he were cast into the midst of the Sea*, *Matth.* 18. 6. So that of all things in the World, it concerns you take care you never become Tempters of others to Sin.

Sin, and either to Omit that which is Good, or to Commit that which is Evil.

II. Nor does it less concern you to refuse Conforming your selves to wicked Men, when they shall Tempt you, which they will endeavour to do several ways; namely, by their Examples, by their Company, by their Flatteries, by their Discouragements and Encouragements, by their Perswasions, and by their Customs. And,

First, You must Renounce or Refuse to Conform your selves to the evil Examples of wicked Men, which would influence you to Sin. Examples have the greatest Influences upon Mens Practices, especially in these four Cases. If 1st, they are the Examples of Sin. If 2^{dly}, they are Common and many. If 3^{dly}, they are the Examples of such, from whom we have a great Esteem. And if 4^{thly}, they are the Examples of those of whom we stand in Awe. But however,

1. We must by all means Renounce and Refuse Conformity to such bad Examples; for why? First, A Christian is call'd out to combat against the wicked Examples of the World, as much as against any one sort of Enemy in his Christian Warfare; like *Elisba*, who preserv'd himself a true Worshipper of the True God, tho' he thought there was not one Man left in *Israel*, who had not bowed his Knee to *Baal*, 1 Kings 19. 14. Nay, Secondly, a Christian is to confront the bad Examples of the World, with a good Example of his own, and in the midst of an Evil and Adulterous Generation he must shew himself an excellent Example of Religion and Vertue. And therefore to this purpose we

are to let our Light shine before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven, Matth. 5. 16.

Secondly, You must refuse to conform your selves, as to the Examples, so to the Company of wicked Men, when happening into ill Company they would entice you to join with them in Sin. Alas, the Company of wicked Men is extreemly infectious, insomuch that most of the more heinous Mischances of your greater Sinners are owing to it. It is this which makes Men Atheists, Libertines, Thieves and Robbers, Drunkards, and Sabbath-breakers. In short, the Evil Communications of bad Company corrupt all good Manners, 1 Cor. 15. 33. and therefore it does infinitely concern you to take the Advice of the Wise-man, Prov. 1. 10, 11. My Son, if Sinners entice thee, consent thou not; nay, my Son walk not in the way with them, refrain thy Foot from their Path. Particularly, 1st, I would advise you who are Young Women, to shun the corrupt Communication of those Young Men whose Conversation, when they meet together, is such Filthiness, and foolish Talking, and Jesting, which are not convenient, and are forbid, Eph. 5. 3, 4, 5. to be so much as once named amongst Christians. 2. And indeed it concerns all Persons of either Sex, both Young and Old, considering how insensibly the Tincture of those Persons Manners and Humours with whom we do much converse, does glide into our Imitation; it concerns therefore, I say, all Persons, as much as 'tis possible, to avoid the Society of wicked Men, who not only do Ill things themselves, but
take

take pleasure in them that do them, Rom. 1. 32. But, 3. if your *necessary Occasions*, and the nature of your Employment, shall draw you forth into the World, then that which you have to do, is, absolutely to *refuse to conform* your selves to the Manners of evil Company, according to that of the Apostle, Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this World.* Nay, but on the contrary, you must, *first*, discountenance their Prophane-ness and Riot: *Secondly*, you must endeavour prudently to divert 'em from both, by useful Discourse: *Thirdly*, and when these Methods fail, you must openly reprove 'em.

To do this Service to God, tho' it is what we have list'd our selves in our Baptism, under Jesus Christ, the Great Captain of our Salvation, to perform, is what we shall be much discouraged from by Men; but however, we have vast Encouragements given us by God, to be thus faithful to the Honour and Int'rest of his Government. It is what in Scripture is call'd, *a Confessing of him*: And our Saviour assures us, that *if we shall confess him before Men, he will confess us before our Father which is, in Heaven*; Matth. 10. 32.

T H E

XVIII. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, **The Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World.**

THE thing I am now upon, is to lay before you the Temptations of the *wicked Men* of this World, and to shew you in what Sense, and how far you must Renounce both them and their wicked ways of Tempting others to sin. And the force of their *evil Examples* and *evil Customs* I have already shew'd you. And now,

Thirdly, *I am to consider the Influence of their Flatteries, and to shew you how you must Renounce and Resist them.* And truly Flattery is a very great Temptation to, and Occasion of Mens continuance in Sin. The ground thereof is that immoderate *Self-love* which most Men have of themselves, and which makes them apt to believe every Man *their Enemy, who will tell them the Truth*, Gal. 4. 16. And the Flatterer observing this, does therefore compose himself to admire and extol, or at leastwise to approve, as very well done, the very *bad Actions* of him he thus imposes upon, or at least such Practices as, if good in themselves, are very indifferently perform'd. And thus Flattery keeping Men

ignorant of the good or ill Qualities in them, thereupon the Good never comes to Perfection, and the Ill that is in them becomes Incorrigible. And indeed it is this wicked Flattery which among all Ranks and Degrees of Men does strengthen the Hands of the Wicked, so that he shall not turn from his wicked way, Ezek. 13. 22. so mischievous a Temptation is Flattery. And therefore you must utterly Renounce it, as you will avoid the ill Effects of it. And in order thereunto,

1. You must see that you cashire every vain Opinion of your selves. For it is this *Inbred Flattery* we give our selves, which disposes and prepares us to a more favourable Reception of it from others; *Be not therefore wise in your own Conceits*, Rom. 12. 16.

2. And having thus dispossess your Breast of an immoderate *Self-love*, you must so far renounce and reject the Flatteries of other Men, as to take it kindly when you are *Reprov'd*, remembering, that *he who hateth Reproof shall die*, Prov. 15. 10. And especially the Reproofs of God's Ministers are to be kindly received and regarded, remembering, that he whom Solomon represents as *Mourning at the last, when his Flesh and his Bones are consumed*, was one who in his Heart despised Reproof, that obey'd not the Voice of his Teachers, nor inclin'd his Ear to them that instructed him, Prov. 5. 11, 12, 13.

Fourthly, *Wicked Men* will proceed farther to tempt others to sin, even by their false and fallacious *Arguings* against the Necessity of a Holy Life. By these they would fain perswade themselves and others into such easie Notions of God and Religion,

gion, as that they may ſin with more ſecurity, and leſs fear. And they are a powerful Temptation to ſin in all times, for why ſuch Arguments as theſe Men are ready, and prepar'd to believe, becauſe they love the thing they plead for; they favour their Luſts, and grant them ſo much Liberty in what they long for, the ſatisfying the Fleſh, and enjoying the World. But it concerns you to reſiſt theſe falſe and fallacious Arguments be they never ſo ſpecious, which do in the leaſt favour your yielding to Sin; for there is nothing more plain in Scripture, than that every Sin muſt with all poſſible care be avoided. It tells us, that we muſt deny *All Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent World, Tit. 2. 12.* And that all true Chriſtians, having ſuch mighty Rewards and Promiſes, muſt be *cleaſed from All Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, and perfect Holineſs in the Fear of God, 2 Cor. 7. 1.*

Fourthly, Wicked Men will add *Kindneſſes and Promiſes* to oblige us to do ill things; and on the contrary, will much *diſcourage*, nay, will often with *Threatnings* compel you to commit Sin, or to omit your Duty. And indeed *Kindneſſes* are very apt to *encline* eaſie Tempers, Promiſes to corrupt unfaithful Diſpoſitions, *Diſcouragements* to cool Mens Zeal in their Duty, and *Threatnings* to force their Compliance with Sin. But neither let Kindneſſes corrupt you, nor Promiſes bribe you either to Commit what is Evil, or to Omit what God commands, conſidering how very unprofitable a Bargain it will be, though a Man ſhould gain the whole World, and loſe his

own Soul, Mark 8. 36. Nor let *Discouragements* slacken you in, nor the *Threatnings* of a Mortal Man force you from your Duty; yea, tho' he could *kill the Body*; but be afraid of displeasing him rather, *who is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell*, Matth. 10. 28.

Lastly, A very prevailing Temptation to Sin, wherewith wicked Men will constrain others to join with them therein, are the *Evil Customs of the World*: And they are the more prevalent, because Custom is apt to take off the Sense and Fear of Hurt in the most unchristian Practices. But a Christian must courageously and vigorously *Renounce* and withstand the force of all sinful Customs whatsoever, especially such as are Immoral. And indeed there will be the greatest Courage required to the discharge of this part of a Christian's Warfare, Cowardice, and a fear of Reproaches, being, I am perswaded, the only cause of most Mens complying with even the *Barbarous Custom of Duelling*, in vindication of their Honour, and of many other of their sinful Courses. But true Courage and Bravery (as Philosophy and Religion, and the sober Reason of all Wise Men tell us) will despise the vain Opinions of the Unthinking and Impious Croud, which for the most part are in the wrong, and will steadily pursue what is Virtuous and fit, and Reasonable and Religious, notwithstanding the foolish Reproaches of the *many*. And a truly Christian Spirit will signalize himself by such a close siding with Christ, and his Laws, as being perswaded, that he who thus nobly

Confesses

Confesses him before Men, the same will the Son of Man confess, and own as a faithful Servant, and applaud as a Noble Confessor, before the Angels of God, Luke 12. 8.

T H E XIX. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, **The Poms and Vanity of this wicked World.**

HAVING fully survey'd the *World*, and all therein contain'd, that is fit to be Renounc'd by every Christian; and also represented to you those Temptations which are given by the *wicked World*, and how we must Resist them; I come now to explain to you, what is to be understood by the *Poms and Vanity of this wicked World*, and to shew you how much it behoves every Christian to Renounce and to despise them. And,

First, We will consider the *Poms*:

Secondly, The *Vanity of this wicked World*. And,

First, As to *Poms*, thereby were anciently meant those *Pompous Spectacles, Plays, and Scenical Representations* exhibited in the *Roman Theatres*, which, because they were so Lewd, Cruel and

Impious, the Primitive Bishops and Fathers of the Church ſtrictly enjoin'd all Chriſtians, at their Baptiſm, not to frequent, or ſo much as to be once preſent, or ever ſeen at them.

And answerable to theſe are our *Modern Plays* acted in the Play-Houſes, which are no leſs inferior to the ancient ones in Impiety and Lewdneſs, than they are in Show and Pompouſneſs. And having ſuch a malignant Influence upon Faith and Manners, as is own'd by almoſt all Perſons, and is generally complain'd that they have, they ought never to be frequented by Chriſtians; and it may very well be look'd upon as a Breach of your Baptiſmal Vow and Covenant, for any of you to be hereafter preſent at them.

Secondly, By *Pomps*, in the Senſe of the Ancients, were meant the *Solemn Proceſſions* of the Heathens in Honour of their Gods, at which to be preſent was an Offence, for which that Chriſtian ſhould be cut off from the Church. And not unanswerable to thoſe are the *Proceſſions of the Papists* in Honour to their Saints, and which muſt not therefore, out of Curioſity or Fear, be joined in by our *Proteſtant Travellers*, when they are abroad; for if they ſhall join, tho' compell'd thereunto by force, in the *Adoration* of thoſe Images, and ſhall rather comply than ſuffer, they will be wanting in *Confefſing Chriſt* and his Truth, when call'd thereunto, which is ſo much every Man's Duty, as hath been already prov'd.

Thirdly, By *Pomps*, *reductively* may be underſtood the Revels and drunken Riots common
at

at *Wakes* and *Festivals*, which, becauſe of the Wantonneſs and Exceſſes uſual at them, all ſober Chriſtians will make it a part of Religion to keep away from. Not but that innocent Hoſpitality, as well as Thankfulneſs to God for the Bleſſings then commemorated, may be ſeaſonable at ſuch times. And ſo much for the *Pomps* of the World to be *Renounced* by us.

Secondly, And as the *Pomps*, ſo you are alſo to *Renounce the Vanity of this World*. And what that is, will appear in theſe Caſes following:

1. When Perſons out-go their Ability in Building and Furniture; a piece of Vanity forbid, *Jer. 22. 13, 14.*

2. When they vainly affect the uppermoſt Places, and ſtrive for *Precedence*, ſo contrary to the Commands of our Saviour, *Mark 12. 38, 39.* This Vanity appears when Perſons affect, or are pleaſ'd with *Titles of Reſpect and Honour* above their Degree and Quality, and deſire to be eſteem'd by others more Good and Virtuous than they really are in themſelves; a Temper of Mind ſo contrary to what was found in their Lord and Maſter, who, tho' he was Lord of all, yet came not to be Miniſtred unto, but to Miniſter, *Matth. 20. 28.* And who, tho' he did no Sin, neither was guile found in his Mouth, yet when he was reviled, reviled not again, *1 Pet. 2. 22, 23.* And,

Laſtly, This ſinful Vanity, fit to be renounc'd, does appear in the *Affectation of Coſtly Apparel and Ornaments*; when Perſons exceed what becomes their Rank and Degree in what they wear; when they are proud of their Ornaments, and puffed up like *Herod* when he was Array'd in

Royal Apparel, Acts 12. 21. When they adorn themselves to undue Ends and Purposes; namely, to inflame Lust in the Beholders, like her mention'd Prov. 7. 10. *Who met Men in the Attire of an Harlot.* And,

Lastly, When they spend too much Time, the Time they should bestow in the Affairs and Business of their Families, and when they deck themselves at unfitting Seasons, viz. when they should be at the Worship of God, whether Publick or Private, which is often almost over before some can part with their Glass. In all these fore-mentioned Cases, I say, does *Vanity* appear; a *Vanity* which must be renounc'd by the Disciples of the Humble and Self-denying Saviour of Mankind.

It is indeed very hard, if not impossible, nicely to fix the precise Bounds to Persons in the matter of Apparel, Ornaments, and the like: But the truest and safest Rule is *Decency*, and that measured according to what is suitable to the Age, Sex, or Quality; always taking the more Sober and Virtuous for our Pattern in such Cases.

THE XX. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World; And all the Sinful Lusts of the Flesh.

HAVING explain'd to you the full meaning of *Renouncing the Devil and all his Works*; as also the *Poms and Vanities of this wicked World*, which are two of those formidable Enemies we are list'd under Christ to encounter, it remains now only to consider the

Third and last, viz. the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and that I should shew you in what sense, and how far we are also bound to *Renounce* them. And thus to know our selves, especially our Natural Imperfections, as this will give us occasion, so it is the most useful part of Knowledge; and for the more full discovery of so important a Subject,

1. I will shew you what is meant by the *Flesh*.

2. What by the *Sinful Lusts of the Flesh*.

3. What by *All the Sinful Lusts of the Flesh*. And together with each of these, I will also declare unto you in what sense, and how far we are to *Renounce the Flesh, and all its sinful Lusts*. And,

First,

First, *Let us enquire what is meant by the Flesh, and in what sense, and how far we are to Renounce the Flesh.* There is nothing so differently expressed in Scripture as this is; it is call'd the *Old Man*, the *First Adam*, the *Natural Man*, *Evil Concupiscence*, and lastly, the *Flesh*: And thereby is meant,

The whole unregenerate Nature of Man, spoil'd as to its Original Frame and Constitution, and despoil'd of that Image of God, consisting in the Perfection, Order and Purity of all his Faculties, whereby he was Originally making towards God, his chief End and Happiness: And it is that Corruption of his Nature and Faculties, whereby he is inordinately bent in all the Tendencies of Soul and Body, and all the Faculties and Powers thereof, towards the Creature. And,

1. *I say, by the Flesh is meant the whole unregenerate Nature of Man, Soul and Body; for even the former is said to be Fleshly, Col. 2. 18.* But,

2. *Thereby is meant the whole Man, not as Created by God, for God made Man upright, Eccl. 7. 29. but as he is now in a state of corrupted Nature; that is,*

3. *As spoil'd in his Original Frame and Constitution, as despoil'd of the Image of God, and as inordinately tending towards the Creature.*

Now the *Original Frame and Constitution of Humane Nature* was this, namely, the whole Nature of Man was perfect in all its parts, the Understanding quick in discovering momentous and weighty Truths, the Conscience faithful in dictating right Ways, the Will entirely Obedient to the Directions of Conscience and Reason,

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the Affections placed upon right and worthy Objects, and both Affections, Lusts and Appetites, always under the Power and Government of right Reason. And in the Perfection, Order and Purity of all the Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body, according to this Original Frame and Constitution, did the *Image of God*, in which he was first created, consist. And so long as he continu'd thus, it is plain, the whole Bent and Inclination of the Soul was towards God.

But now in the unregenerate Nature, I say, that excellent Frame and Constitution wherein Man was originally created, is miserably broken, the Affections, Lusts and Appetites rebelling against the Reason and Conscience, so that he *sees a Law in his Members warring against the Law in his Mind, and bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin which is in his Members*, Rom. 8. 2, 3. And consequently the Image of God consisting in the Order and good Harmony of the several Faculties, and Powers of Humane Nature, is miserably *defac'd*. And lastly, the Tendency and Bent of all the Faculties, both of Soul and Body, is not towards God, but towards the Creature; for *they who are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh*, Rom. 8. 5. *and do mind Earthly things*, Phil. 3. 19. And now this being the meaning of the Flesh, it is easie to perceive, that,

1. To Renounce the Flesh, is to be renewed in the whole Frame and Constitution of our Nature, to our former State, and after the Image of God; or as the Apostle words it, Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24. *It is to put off concerning our former Conversation,*
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the Old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Luſts, and it is to be Renew'd in the Spirit of our Minds, and to put on the New Man, which according to God, is created in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs. Not but that ſo long as we continue in this Mortal ſtate ſome Relicks of Sin and Corruption will ſtill remain within us; ſo that we cannot become in all reſpects *Perfect*, whilſt on Earth, and have the *Image of God perfectly reſtor'd*. But the *Image of God*, to which we muſt be renewed in our Regeneration, tho' it cannot attain to that *Perfection of Degrees* in which we had it before; yet it muſt indifpenſibly have the *Perfection of Parts*, as Divines do diſtinguiſh; that is, we muſt have an univerſal Inclination to all that is Holy, Juſt, and Good, and an univerſal Averſion in Body, Mind, and Spirit, to all Sin: Thus far we muſt Renounce the Fleſh, and *be conform'd to the Image of his Son*, Rom. 8. 29. And then,

2. We muſt ſo Renounce the Fleſh, as to be *Converted in the whole Bent, and Inclination of the Soul towards God*. This being the true Property of the Regenerate Nature to be exalted above all worldly Things, and to be carried out in our Love and Affection towards God. And accordingly the *Fiſt of all the Commandments*, we are told, is this, *to Love the Lord our God with all our Hearts, and with all our Souls, and with all our Minds, and with all our Strength*, Mark 12. 30.

THE

XXI. LECTURE.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works ; the Pumps and Vanity of this wicked World ; And all the **Sinful Lusts of the Flesh**,

YOU have seen what is meant by the *Flesh*.
I am therefore now,

Secondly, To give you, in like manner, the full Meaning and Importance of the *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, and to shew you in what sense, and how far we are to Renounce them. And as by the *Flesh* is meant the whole unregenerate Nature, Soul as well as Body, in this its corrupt state ; so proportionably, by the *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, must be understood all the Faculties and Powers of this corrupted Nature, as well the Faculties of the Soul, the Understanding and Will, as the Bodily Powers, viz. the *Affections, Lusts, and Appetites*. Every Faculty and Power of Soul and Body is properly enough termed a *Lust*, as it craves and desires its Object ; and they are all of them *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, just as the whole unregenerate Nature was said to be *Flesh*, that is, either,

1. As those several Faculties of the Soul do move downwards from God and Heavenly Things, immediately and immoderately towards the Creatures. Or,

2. As the Inferior and Bodily Powers, the Affections, Lusts, and Appetites, do disorderly rebel against the Superior Faculty of the Understanding and Reason, and do carry the Will into Slavery to 'em. And as to the Faculties moving downwards,

I. Consider we the Mind, whose proper Appetite is after Knowledge; and this very desire of Knowledge becomes a *sinful Lust of the fleshly Mind*, and such as must be Renounc'd by us, in these Cases following: *First*, When we are desirous to know things which are either hurtful to be known, as the *Experimental Knowledge* of Evil, or Sin, the thing that ruin'd our first Parents; or when our Curiosity gives us a strange Itch to know *Hidden Things*, such as are not proper for Man to know; as the Decrees of Predestination, and the Counsels of God's Will, which are the *Ark* that no Mortal Eye ought to look into, and is forbid, *Deut. 29. 29.* *Secondly*, This Appetite of the Mind, the desire of Knowledge, becomes a *sinful Lust of the Flesh*, when Persons immoderately Study to be exquisitely skill'd in whatever Arts and Sciences, to the neglect, or contempt of *Divine Knowledge*; whereas the Knowledge of the Christian Religion, and all that concerns our Immortal Happiness, ought to be much preferr'd to any other; for which reason the Apostle did so earnestly pray that his *Colossians* might

might be fill'd with the Knowledge of the Divine Will in all Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding, and might increase in the Knowledge of God, Col. 1. 9, 10. And, Thirdly, We must Renounce it as a *sinful and fleshly Lust* of a corrupted and depraved Mind, when out of Pride, Prejudice, and a Contradiction to all sacred Truths, Men set up their own *Carnal Imaginations and Fleshly Reasonings* against those Spiritual Notions, and those Mystical Articles of our Faith, which are deliver'd to us in Scripture. Which being so Rebellious a Lust, as it is against God, we must *cast down Imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and must bring in every Thought to the Obedience of Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 5.

II. And as in the Mind and Understanding, so in the Will, there is that innate Corruption residing in that Faculty, which renders it *Fleshly*, and tending in all its Choices towards the Creature, and so the proper matter of a Christian's *Renunciation*. The *Will*, whilst we remain unregenerate, is not *subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*, Rom. 8. 7. But in its corrupt State, being always averse to the Directions of God's Laws and right Reason, it perversely chuses those things which please only the Senses, and so becomes in the most proper and immediate sense of the Word, a *sinful and fleshly Lust*. But we must bring our selves to that habit of Self-denial, so as readily to submit to God's Laws, to be govern'd by them, and that in the hardest Instances, as did *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, when God

commanded him even to *slay his only Son Isaac*, Gen. 22. 10.

III. The *Affections* in the Carnal Man do sadly degenerate into what may too properly be called the *Sinful Lusts of the Flesh*. These Passions and Affections of ours, such as Love and Hatred, are then right as they should be, when, 1st, we place them upon proper Objects; or, 2^{dly}, when we steer them towards the thing we love, with Desires proportionable to the Good that is in the Object; that is, when the *best*, and *greatest*, and most *worthy things* are pursu'd with our chiefest and intensest Affections; things of a *middle Nature*, with less eager Passions; and the *lowest* of all Goods, with the least Desires.

But, 1st, these Affections of Love and Hatred, and all the rest, must be utterly *Renounc'd*, and subdu'd, which we shall find our selves to have *misplac'd* upon wrong Objects; that is, instead of Loving, we must utterly Hate and Abhor all Sin, and sinful Pleasures; so the Psalmist, *Psal. 97. 10. Ye that love the Lord hate Evil.*

2. And we must *Renounce* and subdue our Affections, so far as we find them *disproportionate* to the true Worth and Evil that is in those Objects, towards which it is lawful to be well or evilly Affected in *moderate Degrees*; that is, we must not love God with an inferior degree of Affection, and Worldly things with a superior; but as God is the Supreme Good in himself, and the Authour of all the Good we enjoy, we must therefore love him accordingly,

ly, with the intenselt degrees of Affection; so
*Matth. 22. 37. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
 with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all
 thy Mind.*

III. The last of these Powers of our corrupted Nature, which are here to be Renounc'd, are our *Lusts and Appetites*, which, in a state of Unregeneracy, are indeed most directly and immediately, no other than so many *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*. And must therefore be so far renounc'd by us, that, *first*, we must not give our Appetites a loose after undue Objects; for Christians must relish better things than to make *Provision to fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh*, Rom. 13. 14. Nor, *Secondly*, must we Christians gratifie the Cravings of our Appetites in Eating and Drinking to undue Measures, but indeed must *take great heed to our selves, lest at any time our Hearts be over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and so that Day come upon us unawares*, Luke 21. 34. But especially, *Thirdly*, It behoves Christians to Renounce those which are peculiarly called the *Lusts of the Flesh*; whether, *1st*, Lusting after a strange Woman: Or, *2dly*, after a Man's own Wife in unlawful Measures; for Fornication, and all Uncleanness, let it not once be named amongst you, as becometh Saints; for this know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God, Eph. 5. 3, 5. And thus I have fully consider'd those several faculties and Powers both of Soul and Body, as they become so many sinful Lusts of the Flesh, by moving downwards from God and

Heavenly Things, immoderately towards the Creature.

Secondly, And now I am to consider the Lower Faculties, *viz.* the Affections, Lusts, and Appetites, as so many sinful Lusts of the Flesh, under another Notion, and as they do disorderly rebel against the superior Faculties of the Understanding and Reason, and do carry the Will into Slavery to them. And these we are to Renounce, by subduing them to the Government of Religion and Reason; by which means we shall reduce Man in some measure to his Primitive state of Innocence and Integrity, which is the great Design of Christianity. We must subdue, I say, the Flesh, with all its Lusts and Appetites, its Passions and Affections, all our fond and foolish Imaginations, and false Prejudices, to the Power and Conduct of right Reason, enlightened by the Word and Spirit of God, remembering that *We are Debtors, not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh; for if we live after the Flesh, we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortifie the Deeds of the Body, we shall live, Rom. 8. 12, 13.* which brings me to the

Last particular propos'd to be explain'd, and that is to shew you, *What is meant by Renouncing All the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and in what sense, and how far we must Renounce them All.* And, in a word, by Renouncing *All the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, can be understood no less, than that we must indulge no part, nor Faculty of our corrupt Nature, in the Transgression of any of God's Commands. There must

must be no *Fleshly Lust* suffer'd to reign in us; for the *Wrath of God* is revealed from Heaven against **All Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men**, Rom. i. 18. And particularly, our Care and Business must be to oppose *Lusts of Temper and Constitution*, which, *Matth. 5. 29, 30.* is called a *cutting off the Right Hand, and a plucking out the Right Eye*; which because it is an hard Doctrine to Carnal Men, the necessity of it is much endeavour'd to be evaded and shifted off, by perverting the meaning of the Word of God.

And so I have at length thoroughly explain'd to you this important Subject of *Renouncing the Devil, the World, and the Flesh*. And from what has been said upon it, it does appear, that as the State you have List'd your selves in in your Baptism, is a *State of Warfare*; so now you have in some competent measure been instructed how you may conquer and subdue all your Spiritual Enemies; or as your Catechism expresses it, how you may **Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; the Pumps and Vanity of this wicked World; and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.**

THE XXII. LECTURE.

Secondly, That I should Believe all the
Articles of the Christian Faith.

HAVING explain'd to you the first of those Conditions requir'd on our parts in the Covenant of Grace, *viz.* That we should *Renounce the Devil*, &c. I come now in like manner to explain to you the

Second, Which is, that *we believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.* In commenting upon which words,

- I. I will declare to you what is meant by **Articles.**
- II. What it is to **Believe** them; and then,
- III. That we must believe them **All.** And,

First, I am to declare to you something in general concerning the Nature of these *Articles*, or Christian Truths, which are to be *Believ'd*. The whole Bible, both Old and New Testament, is the Object of a Christian's Faith, because *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 16. But there being some Truths Revealed in Holy Writ, of greater Importance and Concernment to us than others, because they do

do more immediately and directly tend to give us due and worthy Apprehensions of God, and to instruct us in the only sure Method of Salvation, by *Jesus Christ*; and because they are the strongest Motives to a Holy Life. For these Reasons these Truths are peculiarly call'd the *Articles of our Christian Faith*, and must therefore be more peculiarly and explicitly believ'd by us. And what those Articles are, you have summ'd up out of the Scriptures, and given you in that *Form of sound Words* which we call the *Creed*.

Secondly, And now I am to shew you, *what it is to Believe those Articles*, so as to make you capable of Life and Happiness. And you must be so thoroughly and firmly perswaded of their undoubted Truth, as to be accordingly influenc'd by the Belief thereof, to the Practice of Good Works, and then to betake your selves to *Jesus Christ* to intercede with his Father for his Gracious Acceptance of the Good that is in you.

I. I say, *your Belief of these Articles* must be *Operative* and *Practical*; it must be such a Faith as does move and influence you to Good Works, or *that worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.

Such was the Faith of *Abraham*, who by his Belief in God was excited to the highest, and the hardest Act of Obedience that was possible to be perform'd; for, *Heb. 11. 17, 18.* we read, that by Faith *Abraham* when he was Tryed, Offered up *Isaac*, and he that received the Promises offered up his only Son, and he a Son too in whom God had promis'd him great Blessings; and

yet, at God's Command, he readily Obey'd, believing however, that God would be as good as his Promise to him, tho' it was by raising him again from the Dead.

And indeed, Faith is always an Operative and Active Principle, whenever the Things *Believ'd* are of great Importance, or *Concernment* to us. And such, it is certain, the *Articles of our Christian Faith* are, they being all of 'em so many Motives, and those the most powerful in the World, to stir us up to a diligent Reformation of our Hearts and Lives. *Every one that hath this Hope, or Faith in God, purifieth himself, even as God is pure, 1 John 3. 3.*

2. The Belief of the *Articles of our Christian Faith*, must be such, as withall causes us to betake our selves to Jesus Christ, to intercede with God the Father, for the acceptance of our Good Works; for *God hath set forth his Son to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God, Rom. 3. 25.*

Lastly, And now I am to shew you, what it is to *Believe All the Articles of our Christian Faith.* And,

1. To Believe them **All**, does import, that we must assent with an undoubted Perswasion of *their Truth*, and Divine Authority, to **All**, and every one of those Great Articles of Christianity, contained in the *Apostle's Creed*, that *Form of Doctrine which was deliver'd to the Christians, Rom. 6. 17.* And,

2. To

2. To Believe them **All**, is also to be fully perswaded of **All**, and every one of those single Truths contain'd in each of those Articles. And an Heretick may be so by Believing only one of those sacred Truths which are contained in an Article, if so be there are any more of great Consequence to be Believ'd therein: Thus, for instance, To Believe that **Jesus Christ was Crucify'd, Dead, and Buried**, does import, both that he died a Sacrifice for the Atonement of our Sins, according to that of St. Peter, 1 Pet. 3. 18. *Christ once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust*: And it does also imply, that he died to draw us off from Sin, and to purchase Mercy for us, on condition of our sincere Obedience. For *he himself bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, that we being dead unto Sin, should live unto Righteousness*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. And now the *Antinomian* does *Fundamentally Err in the Faith* for Believing the First without the Second; and the *Socinian*, for Believing the Second without the First; so that to Believe **All** the *Articles of the Christian Faith*, the second of those Conditions requir'd of us in the *Covenant of Grace*, does imply not only that we are to Believe every one of those Articles, but every Divine Truth contained in each.

T H E

XXIII. LECTURE.

Thirdly, That I should Obey God's holy Will and Commandments, and Walk in the same all the Days of my Life.

THIS is the Third of those Conditions requir'd on our side in our Baptismal Covenant. And that I may fully, and to the best purpose, explain this to you, I will,

First, Lay before you what it is to Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments; or how far you must be Obedient to the Holy Will and Commandments of God, as ever you will hope to obtain Salvation, or to be Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Secondly, I will shew you what it is to walk in the same all the Days of your Life; or how long you must persevere in such Obedience. And this you must to the end of your Lives.

Thirdly, I will clear the Doctrine of Evangelical Obedience, as so stated, from those Doubts that may be raised against it. And,

I. As to the Nature and Measures of Christian Obedience, It is a sincere and entire Obedience to all the Laws of the Gospel. Sincere it must be, by being a true and undissembl'd Service

vice of God, opposite to all Hypocrisie, or a false and feigned Pretence of Obeying him, when in reality we only serve our own selves, or our own Lusts and Interests. *Entire* it must be, by being the Obedience of the *whole Man*, to the *whole Will of God*, and that *at all times*; with this abatement of Rigour, that all our unwilling and involuntary Failings, which, through Ignorance or Frailty, we commit, shall upon our Prayers to God, be forgiven us; and even our wilful Transgressions, when we repent of, and forsake them, through the Mediation of Christ, and the Grace of the Gospel, shall not be imputed to our Condemnation. And,

1. Our *Obedience to all the Laws of the Gospel*, must be *sincere*, by being a true and undissembled Service of God, opposite to all Hypocrisie, or a false and feigned Pretence of Obeying him, when in reality we only serve our own selves. The Lord thy God requires of thee to *Love*; that is, to serve him, *With all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul*, Matth. 22. 37. which shews, that God accepts not of a heartless Service, nor accounts himself Obey'd by what was never intended for him.

Not that God does forbid us intending in some measure our own Advantage in the Performance of his Commands; for the greatest Saints we read of, *had a respect to the Recompence of Reward*, Heb. 11. 26. But,

1. That Man's Obedience is *Insincere*, who, together with his Intention of serving God, joins another Intention of serving Sin, as those
who

who made long Prayers, the better to enable them, under that sanctify'd Disguise, to devour Widows Houses, Mark. 12. 40. And,

2. When a Person shall design some Temporal Ends in his Vertuous Practices, as much, or more than he intends God's Service; for, in respect of our Love to God, we must even hate Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, the dearest Interests and Concerns we have in this World, Luke 14. 26.

2. Evangelical Obedience must be Entire; that is, First, The Obedience of the whole Man. Secondly, To the whole Law. And, Thirdly, Perform'd at all times. And,

First, It must be the Obedience of the whole Man. Thus our Saviour states the measures of it, Luke 10. 27. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, or Will, with all thy Soul, or Affections, with all thy Strength, or Bodily Powers, and with all thy Mind, or Understanding. And, 1st, we must Love and Serve him, with all our Mind, or Understanding; that is, all the Thoughts and Imaginations, all the Contrivances and Counsels of our Hearts must be govern'd by, and kept in Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel, or we must bring into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 5. And as with all our Minds, so, 2dly, With all our Wills: For the Choice, as well as the Practice of our Duty, is necessary to render it acceptable with God; for Instance, Whosoever looketh on a Woman, to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her in his Heart, Matth. 5. 28. So that a wicked Will

is in God's sight, as well Criminal, as a wicked Act. 3dly, As we will render our Obedience that of the *whole Man*, and thereby acceptable to God, we must regulate our Souls and Affections, conforming them wholly to what God Commands. *No Man*, says our Saviour, *Matth. 6. 24. can serve two Masters; for if he Loves the one, he will Hate the other.* By this he lets us know, that our Love and Obedience must go together. And, *Lastly, We must obey God with all our Strength*, or bodily Powers; and it is not a meer Approbation, and Love to the Ways of God, will be enough. *Little Children*, saith St. John, *1 Ep. 3. 7. Let no Man deceive you, he that doth Righteousness is Righteous; that is, you must not be flatter'd by your selves, nor others, as if any thing less than doing and acting Vertuously, will be accepted by God.*

This is the distastful part in Obedience, and therefore many would build their Hopes upon cheaper Services; as that God would accept of the Will for the Deed, and the like. But whatever Men think in their Minds, or desire in their Hearts, or profess in their Words to the contrary, if for all that they continue to commit Sin in their Actions, Christ has told them plainly, that he will pronounce, (when he comes to sit as Judge) *Depart from me, ye that work Iniquity*, *Matth. 7. 23.*

Secondly, To render our Obedience *Entire*, it must be an Obedience to the *whole Law*. We must not think we may pick and chuse in the matter of Duty; for if we Obey not all, we are

are not right in any; for *he who breaks the least, or allows himself in the breach of the least of God's Commandments, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 19. that is, none at all. Thus we must Obey *All God's Holy Will and Commandments*, which brings me to the

Third thing necessary to render it *Entire*, and that is this, that *our Obedience must be perform'd at all times*. And this is co-incident with the

II. General propos'd, which was to shew you, *What it is to walk in the same all the days of our Life*. And the meaning of these Words is, that we must continue in such a *sincere and entire Obedience*, even to the end of our Lives. We must not think to please God by being Obedient by fits, or by serving him only at such times as we are in Humour, and have no Temptation to the contrary: But our Service must be *uniform*: We must Obey him in all things, and wilfully transgress in none. For if, after Men have once escaped the Pollution of the World through the Knowledge of Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, then is the latter end worse with them than the beginning, 2 Pet. 2. 20. And, *He that endureth to the end shall be saved*, says our Saviour, Matth. 10. 22.

III. And now I am to clear the Doctrine of *Evangelical Obedience*, as thus stated, from those Doubts that may be raised against it. And it will be Objected, that if so *sincere, entire, and uniform an Obedience*, as has been said, be requir'd at the hands of Christians, there appears no difference between it and that *perfect Obedience*

disce requir'd of Man in his State of Innocence, as also that *Legal Obedience* requir'd under the Covenant of Works.

And negatively this difference is not so great, but that our *wilful* and *chosen Sins*, committed against Knowledge and Conscience, will still put a bar to our Salvation, even under the Covenant of Grace; for if *he that despised Moses Law, died without Mercy*, of how much sorer Punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace, which they do, who sin wilfully, Heb. 10. 28, 29. So that the difference between the Law and the Gospel is not such, and so wide, as that wilful Sins shall be now unpunished. But yet the difference is very great and comfortable; and it is this:

First, That as to our *unchosen and involuntary* Sins, which, thro' the weakness and frailty of our Nature, we cannot avoid; and therefore by Ignorance, and for want of Consideration, we have committed; such Sins as these, I say, through the Mediation of Christ, shall now, under the Covenant of Grace, be graciously passed by; so that those who have *sincerely* and *entirely*, in the sense as has been deliver'd, obey'd the Laws of the Gospel, shall not be called to an account for such. For Christ who is our *High-Priest*, will have Compassion of the Ignorant, and of them that are out of the way, Heb. 5. 2. And this the first great difference between the *First Covenant* made with *Adam*, where-

wherein the least Sin was unpardonable, and this second *Covenant of Grace*, wherein, through the Mediation of Christ, all our *unwilling* and *involuntary* Infirmities shall be graciously passed by.

The *Second* great difference is, that even our wilful, and more heinous Sins, when by our Repentance we bewail and forsake 'em, and take better Care to avoid 'em for the future; they also, through the Mediation of Christ, according to the Terms he has obtained for us in the *Covenant of Grace*, shall be forgiven us, and shall not prejudice, or hinder our being *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

Among the *Jews*, according to the strictness of *Moses's Law*, the Punishment took place upon the first wilful Breach. *He that despised Moses Law*, saith the Apostle, if it were in an Instance where the Law threatn'd Death, *died without Mercy*, Heb. 10. 28. But our Saviour came into the World to abrogate, as well the Rigour of *Moses's Law*, as of the first Covenant, and to preach up an universal Pardon upon Repentance. And so much is Remission of Sins upon Repentance the great Doctrine of the Gospel, that our Saviour both began his Preaching with it, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Matth. 4. 17. and when he left the World, he commanded his Apostles, that *Repentance and Remission of Sins should be Preached in his Name to all Nations*, Luke 24. 47.

THE

XXIV. LECTURE.

And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

IN order to a full Explication of all that pertains to the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, having already, in the first place, given you an account of the Terms and Conditions of it, both on God's part, and on ours; both what it is to be a *Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven*, which are the Mercies and Favours made over to us on God's part: And what it is to *Renounce the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, to Believe in God, and Obey Him*, which are the Conditions to be perform'd on ours: My next work must be (and then I shall have Instructed you in all that pertains to the Nature and Substance of this gracious Covenant) to shew you,

II. *What a happy State of Salvation this is, to be in such a Covenant with God.*

III. *To declare to you, by whose Mediation we obtain'd it. It was through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

IV. I

IV. *I am to represent to you, by whom we were called into it.* It was **our Heavenly Father** who hath called us to this **State of Salvation.** And then,

V. And *Lastly, I am to make you sensible, what Infinite Thanks we do owe unto God for Calling us into this State of Salvation.* All which Points we have taught us in these words, **And I thank God our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.** To proceed then, in order to a more compleat understanding of the whole Nature of the Covenant of Grace, whose Terms and Conditions I have before explain'd.

II. I shall now represent to you, how this Covenant of Grace does restore us to a **State of Salvation.** *Salvation* does import a deliverance from Danger and Misery, and a *State of Salvation* does import the being put into a Condition of safety, where one may be safe and secure if he pleases. And if it be ask'd, how we came into a State of Misery before? It was through the Rebellion of our First-parents, whereupon they, and all their Posterity, were expell'd Paradise, and Condemn'd to die, Gen. 3. And had the first Covenant remain'd *uncancell'd*, we could have never escap'd. But when we were in this desperate and undone Condition, then was God of his Infinite Goodness graciously pleas'd to *Cancel the first Covenant, nailing it to the Cross of Christ*, Col. 2. 14. And he was pleas'd to grant unto us, and to establish with us a Second, by way of Remedy
against

against the Rigour and Extremity of the first ; wherein God Almighty, as it were descending from his Majesty and Glory, does oblige himself to make good to such as shall enter into it, and continue faithful therein, those inestimable Favours and Benefits before-mentioned, and which I have already explain'd, and prov'd unto you. And now,

III. *It will be infinitely worth our while to enquire by whose Mediation we obtain'd such a Covenant of Grace, and were restor'd thereby into a State of Salvation.* And it was through **Jesus Christ our Saviour**. For such was the Goodness of the Son of God, that when it was necessary that Satisfaction should be made to Divine Justice, then did Christ Jesus *give himself a Ransom for all*, 1 Tim. 2. 6. And because we must continue still in a miserable State and Condition, whilst under the rigour of the first Covenant, that required a Perfect, Exact, Unsinning Obedience, which we in our *Fallen State* could not be able to perform, he moreovert became a *Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better Promises*, Heb. 8. 6. So that through the Mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour, you see it is, that we have been called to this state of Salvation.

IV. *And now let us enquire, by whom we have been Called to this State of Salvation.* And it was our **Heavenly Father who hath Called us to this State of Salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour** ; that is, the same Heavenly Father who granted us, and the same Jesus Christ who purchas'd this *State of Salvation* for

us, have alſo moſt mercifully call'd us to it. Our **Heavenly Father** was much concern'd to have us call'd into it, as appears from the earneſt manner of St. John's Expreſſion, *And we have ſeen, and do teſtifie, that the Father hath ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the World,* John 4. 15. And the Son was no leſs vigorous in it; *It was his meat to do the Will of God that ſent him, and to finiſh his Work,* John 4. 34.

And how did he graciously wooe and importune his own Fooliſh, Rebellious Subjects to come into this State, and to accept the Terms of Salvation. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thee as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings,* Matth. 23. 37. And that no means might be wanting to the end of the World, to reduce the Rebellious and Miſerable Race of Men to a ſtate of Happineſs; *As the Father ſent him, ſo he ſent Apoſtles upon the ſame gracious Meſſage,* John 20. 21. And having all Power given unto him in Heaven, and Earth, he Commiſſion'd thoſe Apoſtles to go and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt; and teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever he had commanded them, promiſing to be with them in the carrying on this great and Bleſſed Work, of bringing Mankind home to God, even to the end of the World, Matth. 28. 18, 19, 20. And now,

V. And laſtly, *What infinite Reaſon have we heartily to thank Almighty God our Heavenly Father, that he hath called us to this ſtate of Salvation through Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour.* This is the laſt thing to be ſpoke to in the Explication of theſe Words.

Words. And indeed it is a matter which infinitely deserves the deepest sense of Gratitude, and the utmost Acknowledgements of the Divine Goodness upon two accounts.

First, Because of the extraordinary advantage it is, to have God in Covenant with us; for God condescending by Covenant, to engage himself to make good to us the Benefits contained in it, this gives us all possible assurance of these Blessings: And upon that assurance the strongest Consolations and Comforts also, to cheer us in going through the Difficulties we shall meet with in our Christian Warfare. Thus the Apostle, *Heb. 6. 17, 18, 19, 20.* God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the Immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath, or Covenant, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong Consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the Veil, whither the Fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus.

Secondly, And being call'd into Covenant, and having all God's Mercies thereby secured to us: This is a singular Happiness, when so many Millions of his Creatures, both Angels and Men, do want this favour.

As to the *Fallen Angels*, the Covenant of Grace was a favour never afforded by God to any of them; for Christ, that he might deliver them who all their life-time were subject to Bondage, verily took not on him the Nature of Angels, but

took upon him the Seed of Abraham, Heb. 2. 15, 16.

And as to *Men*, alas! There are many Nations now in the World, who have not yet enjoy'd so infinite a Blessing, as this happy *Call into a State of Salvation*; who have not yet heard of a Saviour, nor the good Tidings of the Gospel, or Covenant of Grace. *But now, in Jesus Christ, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Jesus, who is our Peace: And are no more Strangers and Foreigners; but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, Eph. 2. 13, 14, 19.*

T H E

XXV. LECTURE.

In my Baptism, wherein I was made.

I Have now given you as brief an Account as I could, of the whole Nature, Terms and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace: *And now I am to treat upon the Sacrament, or Solemnity by which you entered into it; for the declaring whereof, and the full Explication of these words; In my Baptism, wherein I was made, it will be requisite that I should in some measure, so far as it relates to the Sealing of the Covenant of Grace, open unto you the Nature and End of Baptism.*

And

And it is an outward Rite, or Ceremony, of our Saviour's own Appointment, for the Solemn admitting of Persons into the Covenant of Grace; Instituted by Christ for the better Confirmation and Assurance of its Terms; the Promises on God's part, and the Conditions on ours, it being thus mutually seal'd to, betwixt God and us.

First, Baptism, I say, is an outward Rite, or Ceremony of our Saviour's own Appointment, for the solemn admitting of Persons into the Covenant of Grace. To understand which, you must consider, that to have some Outward Rites and Solemnities in Religion, is agreeable to the Frame and Constitution of Humane Nature, as being most apt to receive Impressions from sensible things. And this especially is requisite in the Admission of Persons into Religious Societies by Covenants.

The *Israelites*, it is well known, they were entred into the Covenant God made with them by *Circumcision*, Gen. 17. 13. And that they were by Baptism, at leastwise during their sojourning in the Wilderness, is testified by St. Paul, 1 Cor. 10. 2. *They were all Baptized into Moses, or initiated into the Religion of Moses, in the Cloud, and in the Sea.* And as to the Heathens, they were initiated into their Superstitions by *Purgations*, or Washings.

And now agreeably to both, the Rite or Ceremony whereby our Saviour Appointed, that we should be *Initiated* into the Covenant of Grace, or the Christian Religion, was Baptism, or Washing, which no doubt he chose as what would be acceptable to both Parties; but especially as more significative of Christian Purity.

And so indispensibly necessary to our Admission into the Church he has made Baptism, that it is expressly and positively told *Nicodemus*, Joh. 3. 5. *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* And that no pretences of being Baptized by the Spirit, may be thought enough, to render *Water-Baptism* unnecessary, St. Peter Commanded, even those who had actually and really received the Holy Ghost, as well as himself, to be Baptized in the Name of the Lord, Acts 10. 44, 47.

Secondly, **Baptism** was instituted for the better Confirmation and Insurance of its Terms, the Promises on God's part, and the Conditions on ours, it being thus mutually and interchangeably as it were, sealed to betwixt God and us. There are two Parties concern'd in Baptism; the Minister, who is God's Ambassador, or Agent, 2 Cor, 5. 20. and the Person Baptized. And the Ministers receiving into the Church, by the Ceremony of Baptism, is a Sealing to the Promises on God's part, as the others presenting himself to Baptism, is putting, as it were, his Seal to the Counterpart of the Covenant.

And as it gives wonderful Assurance of mutual Performances to enter solemnly into Covenant together; so that which is especially to be consider'd in this case, is this; that the Mercies on God's part are so infinitely above the meer Merit of our Performances, that we could by no means pretend to such Favours, upon all that we can possibly do in the Service of God; but now after that God has solemnly covenanted, upon our Repentance, Faith, and Sincere Obedience,

to forgive us our sins, and to reward us with Eternal Life; we have a Legal Right and Title to those unspeakable Benefits confer'd upon us. He will be Just to forgive us our sins, 1 John 1. 9. And we shall have a Right to the Tree of Life, Rev. 22. 14.

T H E

XXVI. LECTURE.

Dost thou not think that thou art bound to Believe, and to do as they have promised for thee? Yes verily.

HAVING spoke to the *Sacrament*, or Solemnity whereby we entred into Covenant, express in these words, *In my Baptism*; I come now to shew you *The great Obligation which lies upon us to perform this our Covenant with him*. And if we take the Question and Answer both together, they do plainly import this Doctrine, viz.

The vast Obligations which lie upon us from the Mercies of the Covenant, especially from our Vow in Baptism, faithfully and conscientiously to discharge our Covenant with God. And to begin with the Mercies.

1. If we consider our selves as *Members of Christ*, or *Members of the Christian Church*, why there cannot be an Argument of greater

force to keep us right, in a Regular, Orderly Conversation, than that one Consideration should be. For why? The Church of Christ are a selected, separated Body of Men, who are Consecrated, as it were, to God's Service, and are Called, and chosen out of the World to live another sort of Life than what the World is accustomed to. *Ye are a chosen Generation, a peculiar People, that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darknes into his marvellous Light.* Wherefore, dearly beloved, I beseech you, as Strangers and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly Lusts, which war against the Soul, having your Conversation honest amongst the Gentiles, that by your good Works, which they shall behold, they may glorifie God in the Day of Visitation, 1 Pet. 2. 9. 11, 12.

And to purchase such a Body, as shall more peculiarly and zealously serve God, was the design of our Saviour's coming amongst us. Thus, Tit. 2. 14. it is said, *That he gave himself for us, that he might Redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.* And accordingly he does enjoin us to let our Light so shine before Men, that they might see our good Works, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven, Matt. 5. 16.

Secondly, Nor is the Consideration of our being Children of God, less fruitful of good Arguments, shewing us those vast Obligations lying upon us faithfully, and conscientiously to discharge our Covenant with him. For why? Children are bound to the strictest Obedience to their Parents, as owing to them their very Being.

ing. But *Children of God*, as owing both their Being, and Well-being. *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master: If I then be a Father, where is mine Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* Mal. 1. 6. And therefore does St. Peter, upon this very score of being *Children of God*, most earnestly exhort us to a *Renunciation of this World*, and our filthy Lusts, and to a faithful and careful discharge of our Duty to God our Father. As Obedient Children, says he, *Not fashioning your selves according to the former Lusts in your Ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation,* 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15.

Thirdly, *As Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*, we are infinitely concern'd to behave our selves most soberly, regularly, and dutifully; for if the Heir of a Temporal Inheritance will be so careful to please that Parent from whom he expects a great Estate, but yet so, that he shall certainly be disinherited, if he prove undutiful: How much a greater Motive must it be to a Regular Conversation, to have an *Eternal weight of Glory*, an *Inheritance laid up in Heaven*, a *Crown of Life*, infallibly ensur'd to those, who shall be faithful unto Death. This sure is enough to encourage us in well-doing, and to preserve us safe and innocent, as it has done thousands before us, amongst all the Persecutions of Evil Men on the one hand, or the Allurements of the World on the other, withdrawing us, or frightening us into sin. So that in the strength of the hopes of such an Inheritance, we may be prevail'd upon, faithfully and con-

conscientiously to discharge this Covenant with our God. But,

Fourthly and lastly, That Obligation upon us faithfully to discharge our Covenant, which ought here particularly to be considered, is that Promise and Vow made for us in our Baptism, that we should do so. *Dost not thou think that thou art bound to Believe, and to do as they have promised for thee?* And it is answer'd, *Yes verily.*

Now a *Vow* is defin'd to be a *Solemn Promise made unto God, whereby we do in a peculiar manner engage our selves unto him, to the performance of something.* And tho' to do the thing which is Vowed to be done, were left at liberty before, yet after the Vow, as appears in the Case of *Ananias and Saphira*, Acts 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. It is a provoking Sin to rob God of what has been once devoted to him. And God's Anger is most commonly observable, and very signal-upon such occasions.

But when that which is Vowed, as here in our Baptism, is no other than what by the very Law of Nature we are antecedently obliged to, as to Renounce God's Enemies, and to adhere closely to him in a dutiful Observance of his Commands; to violate such a Vow as this, must be much more provoking to him.

In short, a *Vow* is much of the same Nature with an *Oath*, and therefore to violate it, is *Perjury*, a Sin which does more certainly draw down Vengeance from God than any other. And as you would not put an affront upon the Divine Majesty, having been devoted to God, take care you withdraw not your selves from his Service,

Service, but as the Wiseman cautions, *Eccl. 5. 5. Pay that which thou hast vowed*, and say resolutely with Holy David, *Psal. 119. 106. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy Righteous Judgments.*

T H E

XXVII. LECTURE.

and by God's help so I will. And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.

HAVING fully declar'd unto you the Nature, and Terms of the Covenant of Grace, the Sacrament or Solemnity whereby we entered into it; and the Obligations upon us to discharge the same; I come now to the Means of performing it, included in these words: And they are,

I. A firm Resolution, the importance of So I will.

II. The help and Assistance of God; And by God's Help so I will. And,

III. Prayer for Divine Assistance. And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.

And

And, *First*, that you may see the Power of *Holy and Christian Resolution* (leaving the two latter Points to be also fully treated upon in their proper place) I will shew you,

1. *Wherein Christian Resolution does consist.*

2. *How much the forming of a strong Resolution will conduce to the performance of your Covenant.* And,

First, As to the Nature of Christian Resolution; it is a Peremptory, but Rational Determination of the Will to a vigorous and speedy Execution of those Vows and Promises made in Baptism, notwithstanding all Temptations to the contrary; and this publicly and solemnly declar'd.

The Resolved Christian does not Hesitate and Doubt, or *Halt betwixt God and Baal*, with the unresolved Jews, 1 *Kings* 18. 21. but is determin'd to adhere to God. And in this Determination of his, he is *fixt and peremptory*, not fickle and unconstant, like some, who are sinning, and then repenting; and yet after they have been in their Penitentials, are again sinning.

And Christian Resolution is a *Rational Determination of the Will*: That is, it is not an Obstinacy and Stubbornness without, or contrary to Reason; but upon a due weighing the Dangers and Difficulties of the one side, not to be compar'd with the Infinite Rewards on the other, it is a fixt Choice of enduring, even the greatest Difficulties in prospect of such mighty Rewards, as the wisest course to be taken. And the resolute Disciple of Christ does not weakly and faintly wish he could, but determines actually to proceed to a vigorous Execution of his

his Vows and Promises; and that *speedily* too, like *David*, who having *thought upon his ways made haste, and delayed not to keep God's Commands*, Psal. 119. 60. Nor does he make exceptions of some particular Lusts, of some darling Sins, but resolves to mortifie his most beloved Lusts, and to encounter the roughest Assaults of all his Spiritual Enemies, being perswaded, with St. Paul, that *neither Life, nor Death shall separate him from the Love of God*, Rom. 8. 38, 39.

Lastly, And the sincere Christian, to compleat his Resolution, will *Publickly* and *Solemnly* protest it to all the World, that it is the full determination of his Heart to adhere faithfully to God against all his Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. *Publickly* and *Declaratively* he will do thus, when Sinners are most impudent and publick in declaring their own Impieties. And *Solemnly* he will make these his Resolutions before the Bishop, and the Congregation, at his Confirmation, and by pronouncing then that he will perform, in his own Person, the Vows made by his God-fathers and God-mothers in his behalf at Baptism.

Secondly, And now I am to shew you, how much the forming of such a *Resolution*, as you have seen, will conduce to the Performance of your Baptismal Covenant.

And *1st*, it will go a great way towards it to be *Determin'd in your Will*, and fix'd in your Purposes; the having a Will and Mind to a thing, being that which will put a Person on to do any thing, towards the attaining it. As we daily see those who are *Resolv'd to be Rich*, spare

spare no Pains, nor Care, and stick at no dangers, that they may compass their beloved *Mammon*. And indeed, Resolution is necessary towards the gaining of any Point, where there is danger and difficulty in the way.

But especially, it is highly necessary to be very Resolute in opposing the Temptations of Satan, *whom to resist* you must be *stedfast in the Faith*, 1 Pet. 5. 9. He will try all Methods, not only by subtilty, but by force, to engage you in sin; and therefore you must *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the Evil Day, and having done all to stand*; that is, all will be little enough to enable you to stand, but *stand* therefore you must, *having your Loins girt*, says the Apostle, Eph. 6. 13, 14. which Words do expresse the utmost Resolution as necessary to defeat him. And that will do; for when he finds a Christian is *Resolv'd*, he then leaves him to the Conduct of God's Holy Spirit.

And the same Resolution is also necessary to overcome the *Lusts of the Flesh*, which are boisterous Enemies, and you must, out of hand, *cut them off, and pluck them out*, Matth. 5. 29. for else whilst you Parley with them, they will slide into your Hearts. And lastly, the *wicked Men* of the World are by no means so successfully Resisted, as by letting them know, that you are resolved against those Ways and Courses they would draw you into; for finding you *resolv'd*, lewd Companions will no longer haunt you.

And

And therefore, 2dly, your Reſolutions will be the more powerful to repel all ſort of Temptations, the more publick they are, and eſpecially if Seal'd to in ſome Solemn Ordinance, as at Confirmation, or at a Sacrament; for then your Reſolutions will be confirm'd as it were, by a Solemn Vow and Oath, took in the Preſence of God, and his Church; and Solemn Vows and Oaths being what all Mens Conſciences, which are not fear'd, will abhor to violate, your Reſolutions ſo ſtrongly bound down upon you, will ſcarcely be broken by you. Having ſworn, your own Conſcience will preſs it upon you, that you muſt perform it, and keep his Righteous Judgments, Pſal. 119. 106. And upon ſuch an Occaſion it may be ſaid, and ſucceſsfully laid home to you by the Miniſter of God, or by any other kind Friend and Admoniſher, *Thou haſt Vouch'd the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his Ways, and to keep his Statutes, and to hearken unto his Voice. And the Lord hath avouch'd thee to be his peculiar Servant, that thou ſhouldeſt keep all his Commandments,* Deut. 26. 17, 18. Than which, there cannot be a more obliging and forcible Conſideration preſented to any Perſon, to keep him ſtrictly to his Baptiſmal Covenant and Engagements.

But, Secondly, your Reſolution to be faithful in your Covenant with God, muſt be made, not in Confidence of your own Strength, but of God's Grace and Aſſiſtance. For, alas! if we conſider our ſelves, ſuch is our natural Weakneſs, that we are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves, 2 Cor. 3. 5. ſo that we cannot promiſe

mise nor Vow that we will Renounce the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, or that we will Believe in God, and Obey him, in confidence of our own Strength. Yet in full Assurance of the Help of God, we may firmly Resolve with a **so I will**; for *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*, Phil. 4. 13. But then,

Thirdly, *It is Prayer must obtain that Help and Assistance.* You must **pray unto God to give you his Grace, that you may continue in the same unto your Lives end.** Importunate Prayer is a powerful Means to procure from God a supply for all our Wants, for *this is the Confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will he heareth us*, 1 John 5. 14. But nothing certainly is more agreeable to his Will, than that we should ask that Grace and Assistance which alone can enable us to serve and obey Him; and therefore we may be sure of never failing in such our Petitions. And for the same reason, as well as other more weighty ones, you may also promise your selves a Blessing upon your Endeavours, from the Benediction and Prayers, accompanied with the *Laying on of Hands*, of the Father of the Church, when in **Confirmation** the Bishop shall pray unto God to *encrease in you the manifold Gifts of Grace, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Ghostly Strength, the Spirit of Knowledge and true Godliness, and to fill you with the Spirit of his holy Fear, now and for ever.*

T H E

XXVIII. LECTURE.

and by God's help so I will.

And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.

HAVING shew'd you how effectual a Means Holy *Resolution* will be towards the performance of your Covenant with God.

Secondly, I come now to shew you, that it must be a Resolution took up, not in Confidence of our own strength, but of God's Grace and Assistance. In order to make which appear,

I. I will represent to you how weak naturally we all are; and how unable of our selves to overcome Temptations, and to perform our Covenant with God.

II. I will then shew you, what the Divine Assistance is, and what measures of it, proportionably to such our Necessity, God will bestow upon you.

And as to the *First*, our own natural Weakness, which makes the Divine Assistance so necessary to us; nothing is more certain, than

162 *Of Divine Assistance, as a Means to*
that the whole Nature of Man is miserably
Deprav'd by Sin. Ever since the Fall of our
First Parents, the Light of our Understanding,
which shou'd direct, is become dark and dim;
our Wills crooked and perverse; our Affections
are set upon Earthly things; and our Lusts
and Appetites are wholly bent after what
pleases our Senses, in direct Opposition to the
Laws of God, and of right Reason. We see,
as the Apostle words it, *Rom. 7. 33. A Law in*
our Members, warring against the Law in our
Minds, and bringing us into Captivity to the
Law of Sin, which is in our Members; so that
were it not that Christ, amongst other high Benefits,
has purchas'd for us sufficient Grace to
Renew us throughout, we might have always
reason to bewail our State in the following
words of the Apostle, *Ver. 24. O wretched Man*
that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of
Sin; But now have reason to thank God, through
Jesus Christ our Lord. *Ver. 25. For we can do*
all things through Christ that strengthened us; Phil.
4. 13.

Secondly, And what the Divine Assistance is,
and what measures of it, proportionably to our
Natural Necessity, God will bestow upon us, to
enable us to perform our Covenant with him,
I will next shew you.

And by God's Grace, I do mean, *A secret*
Power and Efficacy of the Divine Spirit, accompa-
nying the Word into the Mind and Will, by means
whereof the Gospel does more readily and effectually
work upon both, to the Renewing of them, and to the
restoring the Image of God into the Soul, namely,
that

that Righteousness and Purity which we had lost by our Fall. Such is the Divine Assistance.

And the measures of it were, and always will be such as are proportionable to the Necessities of the Church. Governors and Teachers in the Church shall have the *Spirit of Government*, and *Gift of Teaching*, and every private Christian may expect such Graces and Assistances as are necessary and proper for him.

In the first Ages, when the Occasions of Divine Assistance were *Extraordinary*, then did Christ bestow upon his Apostles, and others, divers Extraordinary Gifts, viz. *Of Miracles, Prophecy, Discerning of Spirits, divers kinds of Tongues, and the Interpretation of Tongues*, 1 Cor. 12. 10. But now, that the Church is establish'd, and the Truth of Christianity already Prov'd and Believ'd, God does assist the Ministers of Religion only with the *Ordinary* Graces of his Spirit, in the discharge of their Ministry.

And yet even the Ordinary Assistances are *Extensively* very large; insomuch, that every Power and Faculty of our Nature, our Understandings, Wills, and Affections, which are so much deprav'd, shall be so strengthened by the Divine Efficacy, as to discharge their proper Parts in the Service of God. Upon which account all our Christian Vertues are called the *Fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22.

And the Divine Grace and Assistance is also *Intensively* very powerful and strong in the working of this Change within us: The Gos-

pel being not a *Letter that Killeth*, as was the Law, but the *Spirit which giveth Life*, 2 Cor. 3. 6. that is, Grace, which is the Gift of the Spirit, is now join'd to, and goes along with the Gospel in a far greater degree than it did under the Law. And that in so powerful a manner, that St. Paul tells us, that *Neither is he that Planteth any thing, nor he that Watereth, but God that giveth the Increase*, 1 Cor. 3. 7. Where the whole Success of our Preaching, in rendring it effectual, he tells us, is from God's Grace, not from our Skill who Preach it. And so much for the second Means, whereby you shall be enabled to perform your Covenant with God, namely, the Help and Assistance of God.

T H E

XXIX. LECTURE.

And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.

IN these words you have Prayer set down, as a third means whereby you will be enabled to perform your Covenant with God. And in order to make it appear such to you,

First, I will shew you what is meant by praying unto God.

Secondly, I will lay before you how, and in which way, Prayer will be effectual to the performance of your Covenant.

And, *First*, By Prayer, in the largest Sense of the Word, is meant any Addreses made unto God, as well *Confessions* and *Thanksgivings*, as *Petitions* and *Intercessions*, as appears in the Instance of the Pharisee and the Publican, *Luke* 18. 10. both which are said to go up to the Temple to pray, when the one *Thank'd* God, that he was so Perfect; the other *Confess'd*, he was a great Sinner.

Secondly, And now I am to shew you, how effectually Prayer will contribute towards the

performance of your Covenant. And this it will do several ways.

1. As it will *morally dispose* you to be Obedient unto God. For if being in the Presence of an excellent Person will cast an Awe upon you, so that you cannot easily think, much less do a base Action; how much more will it Influence you to be Good and Vertuous, if you shall constantly approach the Divine Presence in Prayer.

Nay, 2. Constant Prayer will more than dispose you. It will *naturally enforce* you to be faithful towards God. I mean, it is a Duty of that Nature, that it is scarcely to be imagin'd how any one should persevere in Prayer, and yet persist in withal to violate his Covenant with God: The Wiseman assuring us, *Prov. 28. 9.* that *He who turns away his Ear from hearing the Law, that his Prayer shall be even an Abomination to the Lord.* But,

3. And especially Prayer, duly Qualify'd, will be a most effectual means to enable you to discharge your Covenant, as it procures for you the Grace and Assistance of God, without which you cannot perform it; Of which you have a full Proof, *Luke 11. 13.* *If you being Evil know how to give good Gifts to your Children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Which words do, with a great deal of Force, shew how plentifully God will give you his Grace, to enable you to serve him, if you shall ask it of him. And let this suffice to have spoken of those

those several Means, whereby you shall be enabled to perform your Covenant with God.

THE XXX. LECTURE.

Wherein I was made.

HAVING Explain'd to you the Doctrine of your Baptifmal Covenant, in what pertains to the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of it; the Sacrament and Solemnity whereby you enter'd into it; the Obligations upon you to perform it; and the Means whereby you may be enabl'd to discharge it: It remains now only to account for two *Circumstances* relating to it, namely, *First*, The *Time when*. *Secondly*, The *Persons by whom, as by Proxies, you were Initiated into the Covenant of Grace*.

And, *First*, As to the *Time when*: This, as is imply'd in these Words, **Wherein I was made**, was in your Infancy, an Age thought by some very improper to enter into a Covenant by Baptism; and therefore I shall have occasion here to vindicate *Infant-Baptism*, or to justify your having been Initiated into the Covenant of Grace by Baptism, even whilst you were Infants, having been the Children of Believing Parents.

I say, *Having been the Children of Believing Parents*; for that such have a right to be Baptiz'd, or to be took into Covenant, may be fairly concluded from that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 7. 14. *For the Unbelieving Husband is Sanctify'd by the Wife; and the Unbelieving Wife is Sanctify'd by the Husband, else were your Children unclean, but now are they Holy.* Where Children are said to be *Holy*, not as *Inherently Sanctify'd*, but as *Privilegially, or federally Holy*; just in the same Sense as St. Peter, 1 Ep. 2. 9. calls the whole Catholick Church of Christians, *Holy, Ye are a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People*; meaning thereby, that they were Holy by Profession, as being Confederated with a Holy God, by a Holy Religion and Covenant. And if the Children of one Believing Parent have the Privilege to be accounted thus Holy, much more may the Children of both. But for farther Evidence, I will briefly prove these Six Particulars.

I. That Infants were Initiated by Circumcision, into that Evangelical Covenant made with *Abraham*.

II. That they were Initiated both by Circumcision and Baptism, into that Legal One deliver'd by *Moses*.

III. That it was, without all doubt, the Intention of our Saviour, that under the Gospel Covenant likewise they should be Baptized into the Covenant of Grace.

IV. That agreeably to the Mind of their Master, the Baptizing of them into it, was in all

all probability practis'd by the Apostles of Christ.

V. That it is very agreeable to the Ends and Reason of Baptism, and the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, that they should be Baptized into it.

VI. And *lastly*, That it is a happy, a mighty Advantage for those Infants who have at that Age been Baptized into it. And,

I. *I say Infants were Initiated by Circumcision into that Evangelical Covenant made with Abraham. The Covenant made with Abraham, Gen. 17. wherein it was promis'd, that in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be Blessed, was the same in Substance with the Second Covenant made with Adam, Gen. 3. 15. wherein it was promised, that the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head; that is, should destroy the Devil's Kingdom. And it was the same also in a more imperfect Edition of it, with that which was made with Christ; for it contain'd the same Gospel Promises of Pardon, Justification, and Happiness, by conferring of which, Abraham, and we, and all his Spiritual Seed, are Blessed; and it had the same Condition on the Performance of which those Promises did depend, viz. an Obedient Faith, for Abraham Believed in God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness, Rom. 4. 3.*

And now, that Infants, even at Eight Days old, were then to be Initiated into this Covenant by Circumcision, is to be seen, *Gen. 17. 11, 12.* And if Infants were then to be Initiated by an

Outward Rite, why not now, since it is by the same Covenant? Especially when it is consider'd, that as he was cut off from the Covenant who was not Circumcis'd, *Gen. 17. 14. The Uncircumcis'd Man-child, whose Flesh of his Foreskin is not Circumcis'd, that Soul shall be cut off from his People*: So that Person is to be Excluded the Church, who is not Baptized; for it is expressly said, that *Except we be born of Water, and the Spirit, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, John 3. 5.*

II. *And as Infants were Circumcised into that Evangelical Covenant made with Abraham; so they were both Circumcis'd, and all Baptized into that Legal One deliver'd by Moses.* That they were admitted by Circumcision, no one doubts; but that they were Baptised, is not so commonly understood and known, but wants not its Evidence even from Scripture; as *1 Cor. 10. 1, 2.* where *St. Paul* tells us, *All our Fathers were under the Cloud, and all passed through the Sea, and were all Baptized unto Moses; that is, the Religion of Moses, in the Cloud, and in the Sea.* And that their very Infants, as well as their Parents, were so Baptized, is certain; for that *all were alike under the Cloud, and in the Sea.*

And as for the Testimony of Jewish Writers, they tell us, that during their Travels through the Wilderness, their Children, instead of being Circumcis'd (which would make them sore for Travelling) were Baptized into the Religion of *Moses*, and that in all Ages,

Pro-

Profelytes and their Children were admitted by Baptism.

III. *And now it seems to me, beyond all doubt, to have been the Intentions of our Saviour, that Children should continue to be Initiated into the Christian Church by Baptism also, he having Adopted the Jewish Rite of Baptism, for the Sacrament of Initiation, without excluding Children from being Baptized: For finding it Customary in the Jewish Church to Baptize them into Covenant with God, if he had design'd any Alteration of the Persons, he would certainly have forbidden Children to be Baptized. And finding it Customary so to Initiate them, there was no necessity of his giving any new Command about it, as being practis'd already. And it is sufficient Warrant to continue the use of it to Infants, that when he adopted Baptism to be a Christian Sacrament, he did not forbid it to Children, whom he found in Possession of it.*

IV. *And agreeably to the Mind of their Master, the Baptizing of Infants into the Covenant of Grace, was in all probability practis'd by the Apostles of Christ. For why? In three several places, namely, Acts 16. 15. and again, vers. 33. and 1 Cor. 1. 16. we find, that whole Families were Baptized: And as it is scarcely to be Believ'd, that there were not Children in some of them; so if there were, it must be concluded, that they also were Baptized; especially if we consider, that it was the known Custom in the Jewish Church, from which Christian Baptism was deriv'd, of Baptizing all, both Children and*

and Servants, together with the Heads of the Families, when any were Profelyted and Converted.

V. *And it was very agreeable to the Ends and Reason of Baptism, and the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, that Infants should be Baptized into it.* It is a very unreasonable Prejudice to think that Infants are not capable of entering into Covenant with God. The contrary of which does plainly appear, *Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12. Ye stand this day, all of you before the Lord your God, your Tribes, your Elders, your Little Ones, that thou shouldst enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God.* And that Circumcision, the Token of the Covenant, *Gen. 17. 11.* was Imprinted upon Infants, is what every Body knows.

Nor is there any thing, in the Nature of the thing, that should exclude Infants from being Parties in it. It consists, as has been often said, of certain invaluable *Privileges* and Benefits made over to us on God's part, and of certain very reasonable Conditions to be perform'd on ours. And they are doubtless capable of having Privileges conferr'd upon them; For the Child of an Attainted Rebel may be restor'd to his Blood; and Minority is no hindrance to the Inheriting of an Estate. Nor are they less capable of being bound to Conditions, as appears from the now cited place of *Deut. 29. 13.* where the Children, as well as the Elders, enter'd into Covenant, oblig'd themselves *to be to God a People.*

VI. And lastly, *And indeed, it is to be accounted a very great Priviledge and Advantage to those Infants that have been so early enter'd into Covenant with God.* And this it is, *First*, upon the account of their having Original Sin now wash'd off, and no more imputed to them; the first Covenant which bound it down upon them, being not only *Nail'd to the Cross of Christ*, but particularly cancell'd as to them; so that the Condemning Force of it is took away as to their Particulars, by their being admitted into another more Gracious and Merciful Covenant. *Secondly*, And it is their Advantage and Happiness, that they have been engag'd thereby so early in the Service of God. By this means they become pre-engag'd to God, before that the Devil and their Spiritual Enemies can attempt to withdraw them; and it will be their Parents Faults, who shall not give them an early Instruction, if they revolt from him. So that, upon the whole, if all these Reasons now given for *Infant Baptism* shall be rightly consider'd, especially as they depend upon, and add Strength one to another, I cannot see but that they carry the greatest force in them to prove the Reasonableness, the Expedience, the Necessity of your having been admitted, by Baptism, into the Covenant of Grace, even in your Infancy; which was the first Circumstance to be accounted for, relating to this great Affair of your Entrance into Covenant with God. The second is, your being presented by *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, and is the last thing I am to speak to you upon, relating

lating to this great Subject of your *Baptismal Covenant*.

T H E

XXXI. LECTURE.

Q. What did your God-fathers and God-mothers then for you?

A. They did Promise and Vow three things in my Name.

THE Introducing you into Baptism by *God-fathers and God-mothers*, is the Second and Last Circumstance to be here accounted for, relating to your Entrance into Covenant with God at your Baptism. And because the Reasonableness of it is not so well consider'd by some, I will therefore enquire,

I. Into the Meaning and Importance of the Words, *God-fathers and God-mothers*.

II. Into the Nature of their Office; *They did Promise and Vow three things in my Name*.

III. I will shew what Reason the Church had to appoint God-fathers and God-mothers, both to Represent, and to Engage for the Infant in Baptism.

IV. And

IV. And *Lastly*, For the further Justification of the thing out of Scripture, I will prove from thence, as a Power and Authority given by Christ, to the Governours of the Church, to make such reasonable Constitutions as they shall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men; so that their appointing of *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, was a most excellent and useful Institution to this purpose.

And, *First*, I am to enquire into the Importance of the Words, **God-fathers** and **God-mothers**. And, in short, they do signifie *Sureties* and *Bondsmen*; and are a Collateral Security, join'd together with the Natural Parents, in behalf of their Children, which are enter'd into Covenant with God. And this their Security is given to God and his Church, that they will be Instruments in begetting them to God.

Secondly, And as to the Nature of their Office, it imports these three things.

I. An expresse Engagement given by Christ and his Church, to the *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, in behalf of those Infants presented to Baptism, that so soon as they become capable to be Taught, they shall be Instructed in the Nature of that Covenant, which their *Sureties* have undertook for them. They engage, that they will take care to have those Infants, whom they have presented to Baptism, Catechiz'd in the Nature of that Covenant they have, in the way of Proxy for them, enter'd into; which is the Importance

Importance of these Words, given in charge to the *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*; remember, that it is your *Parts and Duties*, to see that this *Infant be Taught*, so soon as he shall Learn, what *solemn Vow, Promise, and Profession* he hath here made by you; which it is the proper Work of Catechising to teach them.

2. Having thus took care to have them well Instructed, by Catechising, in the Articles and Conditions of their Covenant, their next Care must be to Admonish and Advise them seriously to apply themselves to live according to those Obligations laid upon them in their Covenant with God; for so it follows in that most excellent Exhortation given to the *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* after Baptism; *Ye shall take care that this Child may be Vertuously brought up, to lead a Godly, and a Christian Life.* And then,

3. They are to take care, that at Years of Discretion the Child should take his Vow upon himself before the Bishop in *Confirmation*; for so their Charge runs; *Ye are to take care that this Child be brought to the Bishop to be Confirm'd by him, so soon as he can say the Creed, the Lord's-Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in the Vulgar Tongue.* So that the utmost Importance of these Words, **They did Promise and Now three things in my Name**, is, 1. An Engagement to Christ and his Church, in the behalf of the baptized Infant, that so soon as he becomes capable, he shall be instructed in his Covenant. 2. That he shall be admonished to live according to it. And, 3. That he shall solemnly declare it his sincere Intentions so to do.

Thbirdly,

Thirdly, If we now consider what reason the Church had to appoint *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* to the 'foresaid Purposes.

1. It is sufficient to justify this Usage, that it is for the better Order and Decency of the Administration; that some should be the Mouth of the Child; that so whilst God by his Minister does promise on his Part such invaluable Privileges, the Child, who is so infinitely concern'd, may not be silent, but may engage to perform the Conditions of his; since a Silence on his side would look like a fullen, ungrateful Refusal of such gracious Overtures, and Terms of Mercy, which would be very indecent.

2. And it is of exceeding great Concernment to the Church of Christ, that Security be given, that every one who is admitted a Member into it, should live to the Reputation and Interest of it. This is no more than what Societies, whose Honour and Interest is of Infinite less Consequence, do require; there being no *Corporation* and *Company*, that will admit into them any Member, from whom they apprehend any Danger, without giving Security against all Disadvantages that may accrue by his Admission. And shall not the Church of Christ, whose Members, if they should prove Scandalous, it would be of exceeding great Disadvantage to it, take such a reasonable Security as may be most likely to prevent such a Mischief to it, as the having ignorant and vicious Members of it?

Nor is it sufficient Security to the Church, that the Parents are bound to take this Care of their Children. Parents may die, or be care-
less; and too much Precaution cannot be taken in a Matter of such Consequence, where the Interest and Reputation of the Church of God, and the Salvation of Mens Souls, is so much concern'd.

Nor indeed is the Charge given to the *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* any unreasonable Imposition in it self, it being a Care little more than what is required from one Christian to another in common Charity; that is, to assist in the Christian Education of those who want such Care to be taken of them; and to instruct the Ignorant, and to admonish them that they do not err. It is a piece of Charity, which is more or less incumbent upon every one: But *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, by the Nature of their Office, have peculiar Occasions to exercise it put into their Hands; and for so doing they may expect the greatest Rewards; the Apostle having inform'd us, That *he who shall save a Soul from Death, shall cover a multitude of Sins*, James 5. 20.

T H E

XXXII. LECTURE.

Q. What did your God-fathers and God-mothers then for you?

A. They did Promise and Vow three things in my Name.

HAVING shew'd you, I. The Meaning of the Words, *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*.

II. The Nature of their Office. And,

III. What Reason the Church had to Appoint *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, both to Represent and Engage for the Infant in Baptism.

IV. And, *Lastly*, besides the Reason of the Thing, for the further Justification of the Use of *God-fathers* and *God-Mothers*, to introduce Infants to Baptism, I will prove out of Scripture, as a Power and Authority given by Christ to the Governours of the Church, to make such Reasonable Constitutions as they shall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men: So that the Churches Appointing of *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, was a most Excellent, Rational, and Useful Institution to this purpose.

I say, *Besides the Reason of the Thing*; for it is sufficient to justify any Ecclesiastical Institution,

that it be reasonable, though not particularly enjoyn'd by any exprefs Scripture. Some Things indeed there are in Religion, quite above our Natural Reason, as the Myfteries of Christianity: And other Points of Faith and Practice, though they are cognizable by right Reason, *Yea, and why even of your ſelves*, ſays our Saviour, *Judge you not what is right*, Luke 12. 57. Yet it is by Scripture, as the moſt perfect Rule that we are to be Govern'd in the Belief and Practice of ſuch Things. But as to thoſe Modes and Circumſtances requiſite for Order and Decency in Divine Worſhip, and for the greater Solemnity of Divine Adminiſtrations, it is wholly left to the Reason and Diſcretion of Church Governors to appoint ſuch, as appears from 1 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 16. *Judge in your ſelves, is it comely that a Woman pray with her Head uncovered, doth not even Nature*, that is, the Reason of the Thing, *teach you? But if any Men be Contentious, we have no ſuch Cuſtom, nor the Churches of God*; that is, if People will be ſo perverſe, I think it ſufficient to tell them; as that which ought to govern them, the Nature and Reason of the Thing, and the Cuſtom of the Church is againſt them. Well, but to make this Matter clear, upon the due underſtanding of which, the Peace of the Church does ſo much depend;

Fiſt, I will farther prove out of Scripture, that there has been a Power and Authority given by Chriſt to the Governors of the Church, to make ſuch reaſonable Conſtitutions as they ſhall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Worſhip, and for the better Edification of the Souls of Men. And then,

Secondly,

Secondly, I will shew you, that their appointing *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* was an Excellent and useful Institution to that purpose.

And as to the *First*, in order to make that appear, it is very considerable, that such a Power was allowed to the Governours of the *Jewish* Church, wherein, though there was little need, one would think, of adding to their Ritual, God himself having so particularly prescrib'd Things of that Nature; yet we find that our Saviour Christ did himself observe the Feast of *Dedication*, *John* 10. 22. though a Feast not of any Divine Appointment. And as many other Observances amongst them were of meer Humane Institution, so our Saviour commanded his Disciples to be conformable to them, *Matth.* 23. 2, 3. saying, *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses Chair, and therefore whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do.*

Nor does he correct that Command of his, when, in another Place, *Mark* 7. 7. he Repri-mands the *Pharisees*, for *Teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*: Those Commands of theirs, which he there means, not being about things of an indifferent Nature in themselves, but Commands that did indeed overturn the Moral Law, as the Command of denying Maintenance to their Parents in Necessity, under pretence of having Devoted their Substance before to God; by which Evasion, he tells them, They made the Commandment of God, concerning *Honour* due to Parents, of none effect by their Traditions, *Ver.* 13. and tells them withal, That *in vain did they worship God, Teach-*

ing thus for Doctrines the Commandments of Men. So that it remains, there was a Power given to the Jewish Church to Appoint such Things as did pertain to the Publick Worship.

And the same Power continued also to those who presided in the Christian, our Saviour committing it to their Care, that *all Things* in Church Assemblies *should be done unto Edifying*, 1 Cor. 14. 12. and that *all things should be done Decently, and in Order*, Ver. 40. which Commands being only general, without particularly expressing all the ways whereby those Things may be provided for, he must of necessity be suppos'd to leave it to the Discretion of Church-Governors to appoint what, according to the Change and Customs of Times and Places, (which in these Things do often vary) they in their Wisdom should think to be most fit, decent, and orderly to be observ'd. And the People he commanded to *Obey them that should have the Rule over them*, Heb. 13. 17. and to *submit themselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake*, 1 Pet. 2. 13.

The Apostle indeed, Gal. 5. 1. bids them *stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled again in the Yoke of Bondage*. But this was a Liberty from the Yoke of Moses's Law, which neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear, which he bids them maintain; and relates nothing to the Observance of decent Ceremonies in Divine Worship, which are far from being any Yoke.

Nor are such Constitutions an *adding to the Book of Life*, a Thing forbid under a severe Penalty, *Rev.* 22. 18. But are indeed, on the Governor's Part, no other than an Executing the Commands of the *Book of Life*, given *1 Cor.* 14. 12. 40. as was before shewn. So that, I hope, by this it does appear from Scripture, That there has been a Power and Authority given by Christ to the Governors of the Church, to make such reasonable Constitutions as they shall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Worship, and for the better Edification of the Souls of Men. And now,

Secondly, I am to shew you, that their appointing of *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* was a most useful Institution to this purpose; that is, that it is an Appointment which contributes much to the decent Administration of Baptism, and that it is also very serviceable to the Edification of the Baptized Members of Christ's Church. How much it makes for the Decency of the Administration, I have already shew'd you: And that it will likewise contribute much to the Edification of the Persons Baptized, will not be doubted, if we consider,

1. The Nature of their Office.
2. The good Effects we often see of Persons having had *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, as Sureties for them in Baptism.

And, *First*, if we consider the Nature of their Office, it cannot but be that Persons who have undertaken to instruct, and to admonish Youth, and to bring them to Confirmation, should ve-

ry much contribute to their Edification. And it would be readily own'd, did all Persons who take upon them to be Sureties for others, make a Conscience of discharging their Obligations; but most are generally too regardless of what they have undertaken.

But however, *Secondly*, there are often seen good Effects of Persons, having had *God-fathers* and *God-Mothers* in Baptism, to whose Pious Care many poor Children owe their Education, and all the Care that has been taken of them, when their irreligious Parents have been careless of them, or their Poverty would not enable them to provide them of Schooling, Books, and the like; which good Effects would be more seen were none admitted to be Sureties for others, who have not themselves communicated in the Lord's Supper, as the Church does appoint: For such would make a Conscience of their Engagements. So that it is not the Churches Fault, that the *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* do not do all the good they might. But the Officetending so much, as in its own Nature it does, to the Edification of the Baptiz'd, and to the decent Administration of Baptism, as has been shew'd; this is sufficient to justify the Governors of the Church, in appointing of God-fathers and God-mothers to introduce Children to Baptism.

T H E C O N C L U S I O N.

I Have, in way of Comment upon the *Preliminary Questions and Answers* of the Church-Catechism, given an account of your *Baptismal Covenant*, in which my chief Design has been to prepare you who are Young, for a very Necessary and Solemn Ordinance, *viz.* **Confirmation.** And now, in Conclusion, the better to apply the foregoing Discourses to that purpose,

I. *I will briefly sum up what has been said upon the Doctrine of your Baptismal Covenant.*

II. *I will represent how extreamly fit it is, that all who have been Baptiz'd in their Infancy, having been first Instructed in the whole Nature of that their Baptismal Covenant; I will shew how fit it is that they should voluntarily Recognize, Ratifie, and Renew the same at Confirmation. And I will answer those Objections that may discourage any from it. And,*

III. *I will then give you some brief Directions for your more Solemn and Serious Ratification of your Baptismal Vows in Confirmation, together with some proper Devotions, for the use of such as are to be Confirmed.*

And as to the *First*: The sum of what has been said upon the Doctrine of your *Baptismal Covenant*, is briefly this, namely, That in your Baptism you were incorporated into that Holy Society of Men, which is call'd the *Church of Christ*, and were made your selves *Members* of it. You
were

were *Adopted* to be his *Children*, and such as he would have a peculiar Care of, and would indulge with singular Favours. And as the Perfection of all, you had then an *Inheritance* of the Kingdom of *Heaven* ensur'd to you, so as to have a Legal Right conferr'd upon you to all those unspeakable Joys contain'd in that State. All these peculiar Favours you had then conferr'd upon you on God's part, on these Terms and Conditions to be made good on yours ; namely,

That you would, *first*, utterly *Renounce* those great Enemies of God, the *Devil*, the *World*, and the *Flesh*. The Devil, because he had Rebell'd against his Creator, for which he was banish'd Heaven, and has been ever since endeavouring to withdraw Mankind to partake and side with him in the same wicked Revolt. But you have covenanted with God, that you will utterly abhor so base a thing, as to side with so cursed a Spirit, either by your own Sins, or by tempting of others to sin. And that you will be always upon your guard against all his cursed Wiles, whereby he would withdraw you into so foul an Apostacy from God. As to the *World*, because the greatest part of Mankind have been prevail'd upon by this wicked Spirit to desert their Creator ; you have covenanted to *Renounce* their ways, so as not to be tempted by their Examples, their Company, their Perswasions, their Threats, or their Promises, to desert also the great Captain of your Salvation Jesus Christ. And as to the Material World, that neither the Riches, the Honours, nor the Pleasures of it, should allure you, nor the Evil and Vexatious Things

Things of it should fright you into sin. And lastly, as to these Enemies of God and us, you did solemnly engage your selves to exercise a continual Warfare against the *Corrupt Lusts* of your sinful Nature, which are ever and anon Rebelling against the Dictates of your own Reason, and of the Holy Spirit of God. Thus in your Baptism you did covenant to *Renounce the Devil, the World, and the Flesh.*

And you did, on the contrary, then engage, as you have seen, that you would give a hearty and steady Assent to all those Divine Truths reveal'd to you in the Scripture, and given to conduct you to Heaven; particularly and especially that you would give an entire Credit to those Great and *Fundamental Articles of Christian Faith* contain'd in your *Creed*, and that you would so thoroughly *Believe* them, as to be influenc'd by them to the performance of the

Third thing you engag'd in your Baptism, and that was, that you would *sincerely and entirely obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of your Life.*

This was that Covenant we made with God in our Baptism. It was obtain'd for us when we were under Condemnation for the Breach of our first Covenant, whereby we had rebell'd against God, and took part with the Devil. For being in this miserable Condition, then did the Eternal Son of God sacrifice his own Life to make Satisfaction to the Divine Justice for our Sins; and did moreover mediate with his Father for us, that we might be receiv'd into Favour upon the Terms now mention'd. And he did not

not only come down from Heaven himself to *Call us into the State of Salvation*, but sent also his Prophets, Apostles, and Ministers, as his Embassadors, in all Ages, to invite Mankind into it, and to *pray them in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 20.

And so many of the World as have hearken'd to that *Call*, have been admitted by Baptism to those Terms of Reconciliation; and have in that solemn Ordinance dedicated themselves to the Service of God, and have Vowed to perform it, as has been now declared. To be faithful to which Vows, you have all possible Obligations lying upon you, and particularly, because you have so solemnly, at your Baptism, sworn to perform it. And in order to that, since *Christian Resolution*, especially if publicly and solemnly made, will have a great force in it, to preserve you from the Power of Temptation, you must therefore *steadfastly Resolve* to continue Faithful in your Covenant; only this you must take care of, not to resolve *so to do*, in Confidence of your own Strength, but of God's Grace and Assistance, which you must therefore earnestly *pray to him for*. And this is the Sum of what has at several times been discours'd to you upon your *Baptismal Covenant*.

Secondly, I am now to represent unto you how extreamly fit it is, that all who have been Baptized in their Infancy, having been first instructed in the whole Nature of that their Baptismal Covenant; I am, I say, to shew how fit it is, that they should voluntarily Recognize, Ratifie, and Renew the same at Confirmation.

1. I say, *All who have been Baptized in their Infancy, having been first Instructed in the whole Nature of that their Baptismal Covenant.* For such is the pious Care of the Church over her Children, that they are scarce sooner Born into the World, than she takes them into her Bosom. And they are no sooner admitted by Baptism, into her Society, but she delivers them not only to their Parents, but, for farther Security, to their God-fathers and God-mothers, as Sureties, with a solemn Charge, that they see the new Christians be duly Instructed in the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of their Covenant with God. And no sooner again are they come to a competent Age, and Years of Discretion, but she enjoins that these same Persons, her Children, "Appear before the Bishop, and that with their own Mouths and Consent, they openly before the Church, Ratify and Confirm the same, engaging in their own Persons, to do all that was promis'd for them by others.

2. And sure now it is extreamly fit, that you should accordingly Recognize, Ratify, and Renew the same at Confirmation. For why, not to do this, would look as if you did disallow of what was done in your Names at your Baptism. And in effect, will be to declare, that if it had been left to your own Choice, you would not have been Baptiz'd at all. And then, judge you, whether by such a Refusal you do not turn Renegadoes from Christianity, and Apostatize in the worst sense, even to no Religion.

Many perhaps may refuse to Renew their Baptismal Vow, because they are fearful they shall not

not be able to perform it. But herein they mistake both the Nature of that *Gospel-Obedience* they covenant to perform, and the Importance of that *Vow* they make to perform it. For the Obedience required now of us under the Gospel, is not a *perfect, exact, unsinning Obedience*; but a sincere and hearty endeavour to discharge all our Duties to God, our Neighbour, and our selves, accompany'd with Repenting of what has been done amiss, and with taking all due care to do better hereafter. And the *Vow* which in Confirmation you are to *Renew*, is not, that you will never sin, but that, by the Grace of God, you will endeavour all you can to avoid Sin, and the Temptations to it; and that if at any time you shall be overcome, you will immediately rise again by Repentance, and take more care for the future. And there is so little frightful in such a Vow, that there is no Honest and Sincere Mind can stand off from coming under such an Engagement.

But alas! it is to be fear'd, that the greatest part of those who stand off from *Recognizing*, and *Renewing* their Baptismal Vow at a *Confirmation*, do this out of a worse Principle. And that determining in their own Hearts not to forsake their Sins, they will not in Confirmation solemnly resolve to Renounce the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, to Believe in God, and Obey him. But this is so plainly to Renounce their Baptism, and to tear and cancel their Baptismal Covenant, and to turn Renegadoes and Apostates from Christianity; That it must be yours, and all good Christians Prayers, to pre-
serve

serve you from it. So that upon the whole, you must be always *ready* and *desirous*, at leastwise, as our Church expresses it, *to be Confirm'd, before you come to the Sacrament*; I say, before you are to come to the Holy Sacrament. For,

3. *It is extreamly fit that every Christian should Recognize, and Confirm his Baptismal Covenant, before he be admitted to the Holy Communion.* For why? Admission to Communion with God in this Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is one of the grand Privileges of the Church of Christ; for therein the Worthy Communicant is permitted to Feast with God at his own Table, upon the Memorials of Christ's precious Sacrifice. He has the Spirit of God convey'd, and the Pardon of his Sins seal'd unto him therein. And sure, it is but what is very requisite, that before a Person be admitted to the Enjoyment of such Sacred Privileges, he should solemnly Recognize his Covenant with God, and thereby own, and declare, that he is not an *Alien from the Commonwealth of God, a Stranger from the Covenants and Promises*, without which solemn Acknowledgment, the Church could scarcely avoid giving, many times, *that which is Holy to Dogs*, or of Profaning the Holy Mysteries, by admitting Apostates from Christianity to partake in them.

Lastly, I am now to give you some Directions concerning the solemn *Recognizing* of your Baptismal Vow and Covenant at Confirmation, together with some short Devotions proper for that Occasion. And both Directions and Prayers shall relate to what you are to do *Before, At, and After a Confirmation*: And I shall endeavour to make the Prayers

Prayers as well Instructive as Devotional, with respect to the subject to which they referr.

And, *First, Before* a Confirmation, having gone through a Course of Catechetical Instruction; so that you have at leastwise attain'd to a general Knowledge of the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, that Covenant you have entered into in your Baptism;

1. I would advise you, that upon notice of an *Episcopal Confirmation* you would bethink yourselves of laying hold of the Opportunity, not only because Opportunities of this Nature are very scarce in most Places, but also because you cannot so regularly be admitted to the Lord's Supper, till first you have been *Confirm'd*; that is, have *Recognized* that Covenant you are to Ratifie and Renew every time you Feast upon the Memorials of Christ's Sacrifice, and have receiv'd the Episcopal Benediction upon such a solemn Recognition; for so our Church has upon wise Considerations ordered, *viz. That none shall be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be Confirm'd, or be desirous and ready to be Confirm'd.*

2. I would have you sequester some Day, or at leastwise some considerable part of a Day, to take into Consideration the great Undertaking you are going upon; and retiring from the World, see that you seriously reflect upon all that has been declar'd to you concerning the Nature and Importance of your Baptismal Covenant. Consider the Forces of your Spiritual Enemies, and your Promises, notwithstanding their utmost Attempts upon you, to stick firm to your Faith,
and

and close to your Obedience. And especially, to enforce you to this, weigh well the inestimable Privileges of a Christian who is in Covenant with God, and what singular Advantages are contain'd under these Terms of being *Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*. And having duly consider'd this whole Matter, you may address your self to God in the manner following.

O Most Gracious and Eternal Lord God ! Thou art the Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and Abundant in Mercy and Truth. When I come to consider thy Goodness, I am amaz'd at thy Condescension, to Transact with us in a way of Covenant, Obliging thy self by Promise to make Good those Blessings ; the Thousandth part of which the Merit of our Performances could not have given us reason to expect. But we, wretched Creatures, when we had broke our Covenant with Thee, and made our selves liable to thy eternal Displeasure, through thy Mercies in Christ, were not wholly cast off, but admitted to such Terms of Reconciliation, as do put us into a State infinitely beyond what the Fallen Angels, or the rest of Mankind, who are out of the Pale of the Church, do enjoy. It is an uncomfortable State which those are in who are Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, Stranger sfrom the Covenant and Promises ; who are without Hope, and without the Knowledge of the True God in the World. But we the Members of thy Church (blessed be thy infinite Goodness to us) are no more Strangers and Foreigners ; but Fellow-
zens with the Saints, and of the Household of God.

O

For

Prayers as well Instructive as Devotional, with respect to the subject to which they referr.

And, *First, Before* a Confirmation, having gone through a Course of Catechetical Instruction; so that you have at leastwise attain'd to a general Knowledge of the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, that Covenant you have entered into in your Baptism;

1. I would advise you, that upon notice of an *Episcopal Confirmation* you would bethink yourselves of laying hold of the Opportunity, not only because Opportunities of this Nature are very scarce in most Places, but also because you cannot so regularly be admitted to the Lord's Supper, till first you have been *Confirm'd*; that is, have *Recognized* that Covenant you are to Ratifie and Renew every time you Feast upon the Memorials of Christ's Sacrifice, and have receiv'd the Episcopal Benediction upon such a solemn Recognition; for so our Church has upon wise Considerations ordered, *viz. That none shall be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be Confirm'd, or be desirous and ready to be Confirm'd.*

2. I would have you sequester some Day, or at leastwise some considerable part of a Day, to take into Consideration the great Undertaking you are going upon; and retiring from the World, see that you seriously reflect upon all that has been declar'd to you concerning the Nature and Importance of your Baptismal Covenant. Consider the Forces of your Spiritual Enemies, and your Promises, notwithstanding their utmost Attempts upon you, to stick firm to your Faith,
and

and close to your Obedience. And especially, to enforce you to this, weigh well the inestimable Privileges of a Christian who is in Covenant with God, and what singular Advantages are contain'd under these Terms of being *Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*. And having duly consider'd this whole Matter, you may address your self to God in the manner following.

O Most Gracious and Eternal Lord God ! Thou art the Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and Abundant in Mercy and Truth. When I come to consider thy Goodness, I am amaz'd at thy Condescension, to Transact with us in a way of Covenant, Obliging thy self by Promise to make Good those Blessings ; the Thousandth part of which the Merit of our Performances could not have given us reason to expect. But we, wretched Creatures, when we had broke our Covenant with Thee, and made our selves liable to thy eternal Displeasure, through thy Mercies in Christ, were not wholly cast off, but admitted to such Terms of Reconciliation, as do put us into a State infinitely beyond what the Fallen Angels, or the rest of Mankind, who are out of the Pale of the Church, do enjoy. It is an uncomfortable State which those are in who are Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, Stranger sfrom the Covenant and Promises ; who are without Hope, and without the Knowledge of the True God in the World. But we the Members of thy Church (blessed be thy infinite Goodness to us) are no more Strangers and Foreigners ; but Fellow-Citizens with the *Saints*, and of the Household of God.



For

For we are called forth of the wicked World by the Preaching of the Gospel, to the Knowledge, Belief, and Service of the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the only True God. And it is an exceeding Privilege we enjoy as Members of this Society, whereof Christ is the Head; for hereby of thy Goodness, we are not only under the Guidance of most Excellent and Wise Laws, and enjoy the Benefit of most Edifying and Comfortable Ordinances; but we enjoy thereby a great measure of Divine Grace and Assistance derived down from Christ our Head, and convey'd by those blessed Ordinances, to enable us to Conform our selves to thy Religion, and to Obey thy Gracious Commandments.

By being Baptiz'd into the Covenant of Grace, thou hast graciously Adopted us to be thy Children, whereby we have pardon of Sins upon our hearty Repentance: We find thee not severe in marking what is done amiss; but as a Father pitieth his Children, even so thou the Lord pitiest those that fear thee, and who do not willingly displease thee. We find an easie access to the Throne of Grace, for the pardon of all our Sins past, and for whatever else we want, especially that Grace which shall enable us to amend, and become better for the future.

And as the Crown and Perfection of all thy Favours, being Children of God, thou hast graciously assur'd us, we shall be Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven; whereby our Hopes of all the unspeakable Joys of that blessed State being sure and steadfast, as founded upon the express Promises and Covenant of Thee the God of Truth; there is no Temptation so alluring, nor Suffering so great, which we may not overcome thereby, thy Holy Spirit assisting us therein.

And now, O Blessed God: in Mercy look down up-
on

on me, whom thou hast graciously admitted by Baptism into this Holy Society, wherein I am listed manfully to fight under Christ's Banner, against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. And do thou enable me to Renounce and Resist all these Enemies, to thy Honour and my Salvation. Grant that I may ever, with the utmost Detestation, Renounce and Abhor both the Devil and all his Works, whether they be his Works of Sin, or his tempting of us to the same. Let me ever look upon Sin as a Rebellion against thy Authority: And that the suffering of my self to be tempted by him, in any manner of way, to sin, is to yield my self up to the Devil's Service. And therefore to avoid the Snares of the Devil, grant me that I may be always sober and vigilant, and watch unto Prayer.

Let not the World ever prevail over me, so as either by its Riches, Honours, or Pleasures, to allure me; or by its Afflictions and Calamities to affright me from thee. Let not the wicked Men of the World, by the Influence of their Company, Examples, or Persuasions, enveigle me; nor the pompous Vanity of it, bewitch me into Sin.

Nor let any the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, whether the Corruption of my Understanding, the Perverseness of my Will, the Disorder of my Passions and Affections, or the Violence of my lustful Appetites, carry me out to unlawful Gratifications; but enable me always to keep them in subjection to the Dictates of right Reason and Religion.

And do thou, O God, increase my Faith, and give me such a full and strong Persuasion of all those Sacred and Powerful Truths, scattered throughout the Gospel, and summ'd up in my Creed, as may ever Influence me to a holy Obedience.

And let that Obedience, O God, be sincere and entire to all thy Commands, Serving thee with all my Heart, with all my Mind, with all my Soul, and with all my Strength, loving Thee above all the World, and my Neighbour as my self; and in this Obedience, Grant, O God, that I may constantly walk all the Days of my Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Secondly, At the Time of Confirmation, or when you are standing before the Bishop, you are then to Recollect what you have been Instructed in concerning your Baptismal Covenant; and you are to possess your Soul with those strong and mighty Reasons that you should solemnly Recognize it, by taking all that upon your selves which in your Infancy your God-mothers and God-mothers did engage for you. And thereupon, whether standing or sitting, as you shall have Conveniency, see that from the Inward Recesses of your own Heart, you offer up this following Dedication of your self to God.

O *Most Blessed, and most Merciful Father, who keepest Covenant and Mercy for them that Love Thee, and observe thy Commandments; That being in a State of Misery, we should be call'd into a State of Salvation; That thy only Begotten Son should Mediate and Obtain this Redemption for us; That he should himself descend from Heaven to call us into that Covenant of Grace which holds it out to us; And should send his Ambassadors, the Ministers of Religion, to pray us to be Reconcil'd to God upon those most reasonable Terms contain'd therein:*

therein : This is such Astonishing Grace and Favour on thy side, that we can never sufficiently admire thy Loving Kindness to us, nor be duly thankful for the same. But being sensible, O God, in some measure, how in my Baptism I was admitted into that Covenant, which entitles me, through thy Mercy in Christ, to such infinite Privileges. I do here voluntarily present my self in thy presence, to Recognize the same ; and do here solemnly acknowledge those mighty Obligations lying upon me to be faithful in it ; and this I do, both in Gratitude for such an inestimable Favour as it was, to be made a Member of Christ's Church, to be adopted into the Family of thy Children, and to be instated in a Title to the Inheritance of thy Kingdom ; and also from those Vows made in my behalf, that I should Renounce the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, Believe in God, and Obey him. And that I will vigorously and speedily execute those Vows and Promises made in my Baptism, notwithstanding all Temptations to the contrary, I do here with a full Determination of my Will, solemnly resolve to do, in confidence, O God, not of my own Strength, but of thy Grace and Assistance, which I trust will be imparted to me by the laying on of Hands, and constantly afforded me through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

After you have been Confirmed, retire as soon as you can ; and reflecting upon that Recognition of your Baptismal Covenant, which you have made, and the solemn Resolution to perform it, you may offer up the following Prayer to God, that he would enable you to do the same.

O Almighty God, with whom there is no Variableness, nor shadow of Change, support and strengthen me, a poor frail Creature, who am unstable as Water. I have indeed Recogniz'd my Baptismal Vow, and have took it upon my self to perform all that in my Baptism was promis'd for me. But the Devil, that roaring Lion, who walketh about the Earth, seeking whom he may devour, and is always intent to foil a new Professor, will now in an especial manner I expect, make his fiercest attacks against me. The World also of loose and profligate Livers enrag'd that any should Dedicate their Early Years to God, to their Reproach, will endeavour by all the Methods of Persuasion, to draw me aside, to accompany them in the destructive Ways of Sin. And what is worse, my own Treacherous Heart within is ready to yield to any of those Temptations from without. Yea, alas! I find my whole Nature, Soul, and Body, so miserably deprav'd, that all the Faculties and Powers of both are sadly dispos'd to that which is Evil. My Understanding is very dull in the Apprehension of Spiritual Things, my Will very averse to chuse that which is right, my Affections listless to Heavenly Exercises, and my Lusts and Appetites apt to rebel against the Dictates of right Reason and Religion, so that I may with him in St. Paul, cry out, O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin!

But my Comfort is, that I can return with I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord; for thou, O blessed Jesu, hast all Power in Heaven and in Earth given unto thee, so that thou canst succour and strengthen us when we are tempted, and enable us to overcome. And, O God of all Grace and Might, the

Root of our Life, and Power, and Strength, without whom all good Desires and Purposes wither and die, be ever present with me, to assist, support and comfort me, who do entirely confide in thee, and have no hope but in thine Infinite Mercies.

Now that thou enclinest my Heart towards thee, and hast given me a thankful Sense of thy Love, and some Will to Obey thee in Well-doing, I am encourag'd to hope, that thou wilt not deny me the constant Assistance of thy good Spirit to strengthen, confirm, and settle me in a perfect Love and stedfast Obedience to all thy Holy Commands.

Cherish therefore and encrease the most faint, but sincere Motions which thou seest in me towards a more compleat Participation of thee. And especially preserve me in a full Confidence in thy Almighty Love, as ready to accomplish the Desires and Endeavours of all those who yield up themselves unto it, in hearty Willingness to be govern'd by it, that being born up by this strong Hope in thee my Helper, and exceeding great Reward, no Temptation may be able to prevail over me; but I may walk stedfastly and evenly with thee, in all Conditions and Circumstances of Life. Make me feel so much of the Comfort of this Faith, and Love, and Hope, and Obedience, reviving me to a delightful Sense of a blessed Immortality; that whatsoever Allurements or Discouragements I meet withall in this World, they may only provoke me to give a greater Proof of all these in a constant Adherence to my Duty, and occasion the Entcrease of my unspeakable Joy and Satisfaction. All which I beg of thee through the Alone Merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

A N

Office for YOUTH.

Texts of Scripture proper for a Morning Meditation.

Eph. 5. **A** Wake thou that sleepest, and arise
14. from the Dead, and Christ shall
 give thee Light.

Rom. 13. Ver. 11. Knowing the time, that now
 it is high time to awake out of Sleep; for now is
 our Salvation nearer than when we believed.

Ver. 12. The Night is far spent, the Day is
 at hand; let us therefore cast off the Works
 of Darkness, and let us put on the Armour of
 Light.

Ver. 13. Let us walk honestly as in the Day,
 and put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matth. 5. 16. Let your Light so shine before
 Men, that they may see your good Works, and
 glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.

Eccles. 2. 13. Wisdom excelleth Folly, as far
 as Light excelleth Darkness.

Morning Ejaculations.

I. *Psal. 3. 5.* I laid me down and slept, I awa-
 ked, for the Lord sustained me.

II. *Psal. 90. 14.* O satisfie me early with thy
 Mercy, that I may rejoyce and be glad all my days.

III. *Psal.*

III. *Psal.* 59. 16, 17. I will sing of thy Power, yea, I will sing aloud of thy Mercy in the Morning; for thou hast been my Defence and Refuge in the Day of my Trouble.

IV. *Ver.* 17. Unto thee, O my Strength, will I sing; for God is my Defence, and the God of my Mercy.

V. *Psal.* 71. 5. Thou art my Hope, O Lord God; thou art my Trust from my Youth.

VI. *Ver.* 6. By thee have I been holden up from the Womb; thou art he that took me out of my Mother's Bowels; my Praises shall be continually of thee.

VII. *Psal.* 148. 12. Young Men and Maidens, Old Men and Children;

VIII. *Ver.* 13. Let them praise the Name of the Lord; for his Name alone is Excellent, his Glory is above the Earth and Heaven.

IX. *Psal.* 113. 1. Praise ye the Lord, praise him, O ye Servants of the Lord.

X. *Ver.* 2. Blessed be the Name of the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore.

XI. *Ver.* 3. From the rising up of the Sun, unto the going down of the same, the Lord's Name is to be praised.

XII. *Psal.* 119. 124. Deal with thy Servant according to thy Mercies, O teach me thy Statutes.

XIII. *Ver.* 125. I am thy Servant, give me Understanding, that I may know thy Testimonies.

XIV. *Psal.* 143. 8. Cause me to learn thy loving kindness, for in thee do I trust; cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my Soul unto thee.

A Morning Prayer.

O God, the Father of Heaven, I render unto Thee all possible Praise and Thanksgiving, who hast preserved me safe from the Danger of the Night past. I do humbly beseech thee, that thou wouldst take me under the Protection of thy good Providence this Day and for evermore... And as thou hast dispell'd the Darkness of the Night, and fill'd the World with the Light of the Sun, and hast awaken'd me from Sleep; so do thou vouchsafe, O Lord, to expel the Darkness of Ignorance from my Mind, enlightning it with the Beams of thy most Holy Spirit, and with the Knowledge of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that true Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World; that so declining from the Works of Darkness, and directing my Steps according to the Truth of thy most Holy Word, I may always walk as in open day, Soberly, Righteously, and Godly; subduing all Youthful Lusts, and avoiding all Evil Company; and at length may arrive to the Habitations of Light under the Conduct of the same thy Son; to whom with thee, and the Holy Spirit, one God of most Adorable Majesty, be all Honour and Glory, both now and evermore. Amen.

Scripture Texts for Evening Meditation.

John 11. **A**RE there not twelve Hours in the Day? If any Man walk in the Day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the Light of this World.

Ver. 10. But if a Man walk in the Night he stumbleth, because there is no Light in him.

John

John 3. 19. And this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds were Evil.

John 1. 9. Now Jesus Christ is that true Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World.

John 12. 35. Let us therefore walk whilst we have Light, lest Darknes come upon us; for he that walketh in Darknes knoweth not whither he goeth.

John 2. 9. He that saith he is in the Light, and hateth his Brother, is in Darknes, even until now.

Ver. 10. He that loveth his Brother abideth in the Light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him.

Isai. 58. 10. If thou draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and satisfie the afflicted Soul; then shall thy Light rise in Obscurity, and thy Darknes shall be as the Noon-day.

Evening Ejaculations.

Psal. **I**T is a good thing to give Thanks unto thee, O Lord; and to sing Praises unto thy Name, O most high.

Ver. 2. To shew forth thy Loving kindness in the Morning, and thy Faithfulness every Night.

Psal. 43. 3. O send out thy Light and thy Truth, let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy Holy Hill, and to thy Tabernacle.

Psal. 119. 105. Thy Word is a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Paths.

Psal.

Psal. 119. 133. Order my Steps in thy Word; and let not any Iniquity have dominion over me.

Psal. 36. 9. With thee is the Fountain of Life; in thy Light shall we see Light.

Psal. 13. 3. Consider and hear me, O Lord, my God, lighten mine Eyes that I sleep not in Death.

Psal. 4. 8. I will lay me down in Peace, and sleep; for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me to dwell in Safety.

An Evening Prayer.

O Lord God, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, how infinitely am I abash'd to appear before thee, who cannot pass one Day without offending thee, both by Sins of Omission and Commission, both by leaving undone those things which I ought to have done, and by doing those things which I ought not to have done. And in both these kinds have I offended thee this Day, and that both in Thought, Word, and in Deed; particularly, [Here mention any Sin of either of the foregoing kinds you have been guilty of.] But I fly into the Arms of thy Fatherly Compassion; Lord, for thy Mercies sake forgive me, cleanse me from my Wickedness, and strengthen my Weakness, that I may overcome all the Temptations which daily surround me, and may henceforward continue stedfast in my Covenant with thee.

Accept of my humblest Praise and Thanksgiving, O Lord, for all the Goodness thou hast this Day shewed me; for all the helps of preventing or restraining Grace thou hast vouchsafed me; for whatever I have done this Day, which is in any measure
acceptable

This if a *acceptable to thee ; for whatever progress*
 I have made in my Study, [or Success
 Servant. thou hast given to my honest La-
 bours] *as also for thy Preservation of*
me from all the Miseries and Dangers which frail
Mortality is every Moment exposed to, particularly
for [here name any particular Blessing or De-
liverance God has sent you.]

And now, O Lord God, in whose Protection con-
sists the safety of Man, and of all Creatures, I com-
mit my self wholly to thy Protection this Night, be-
secching thee that thou wouldst graciously preserve me
from the Power of the Prince of Darkness, who to
deceive Mankind, can transform himself into an An-
gel of Light ; and that thou wouldst likewise preserve
me from all Dangers both of Soul and Body. And
let me not be so overwhelm'd with slumber as wholly
to forget thee ; but when my Body is overtaken with
sleep, let my Mind continually watch, and be intent
upon thee both Day and Night. And when Rest shall
have refresh'd both Body and Mind, as much as shall
suffice Nature, let the Morning find me more apt
and propense to serve thee, to the Salvation of my
own Soul, the good of my Neighbour, and the Glory
of thy most Holy Name. And all this I beg for Jesus
Christ his sake, to whom with thee and the Holy
Spirit be ascribed all Honour and Glory, by me,
and by all Mankind, throughout all Ages, World
without end. Amen.

[The three following Prayers are to be
 added to the foregoing Morning and
 Evening Prayer, by the Persons respec-
 tively concern'd in them.

A Prayer

A Prayer for a Youth at School.

O God the Father of Lights, and the Giver of every good and perfect Gift, I do render thee all possible Praise and Thanksgiving, that thou hast put it into the Hearts of my Parents [Guardians] to deliver me up to be Instructed in good Literature, at an Age which is most flexible, and apt to learn. I do humbly intreat thee, that I may not through sloth, or negligence, fail their expectations of me. And because no Vigilance, Industry, nor Study, will avail anything without thy aid, vouchsafe, I beseech thee, to enlighten my Mind with a Ray from above, and inspire me with that desire and love of Learning, Wisdom, and Vertue; with such a readiness to apprehend, and memory to retain that which is good, that I may become Learned and Pious, and thereby serviceable to Church and State, and to the Honour of thy most Holy Name. These things, O God, I do most earnestly beg of thee for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be ascribed all Honour and Praise both now and for evermore. Amen.

A Prayer to be used by Children, under the Government of their Parents.

O Eternal God and Heavenly Father, thou that art the kind Author of my Being, be thou the Gracious Guide of my Life. My Age is simple and unexperient'd, and be thou pleased to inspire me with Truth from above. I am come into a World of Snares and

and Temptations; O do thou fill me with the Knowledge and Love of thy Truth, that it may keep me from the Path of the Destroyer. O possess my Heart with the Fear of thee, and Dependance upon thee, that I may walk before thee the Almighty God, and be perfect; that I knowing that thou art my exceeding great Reward, may neither be discontented in my present State, nor distrustful of a Provision for the future. Possess also my Heart, O my God, with that natural Tenderness for my Parents, and with that Christian Sense of my Duty towards 'em, that my Language may be respectful, my Actions dutiful, and my whole Behaviour such that I may not encrease the Burden and Care of their Life, but prove a Comfort and Support to 'em. O my God, possess me lastly with a Spirit of Meekness, Justice, Truth, and Industry, that by Reverence to my Betters, by Courteousness, Truth and Faithfulness towards all; and by Diligence in whatsoever I am employ'd, I may grow like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, my Leaf may not wither, whatsoever I do may prosper, and I may bring forth my Fruit in due Season, encreasing daily in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with God and Man: Hear, O hear the Voice of my Petition, for in thee only is my Trust, though Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for a Servant.

O Holy and Just God, I know that without Holiness, it is impossible for me to please thee here, or to enjoy thee hereafter; I beseech thee therefore, that my Understanding may be so enlightened, my Conscience convinc'd, and my whole Heart enflamed
with

with the Love of Holiness, that I may be Holy in all manner of Conversation. Beget in me a most tender and lively Sense of the great Duties of Obedience, Justice and Charity which I owe to my Master, that I governing my self by these in all my Actions, I may in my Station advance the Honour of God, the Contentment and Interest of my Master, the Peace and Vertue of the Family, and my own both Temporal and Eternal Happiness. I know, O Lord, that no Acts of Injustice, or Unfaithfulness between Man and Man shall go unpunish'd: I know that for these things sake the Wrath of God is reveal'd from Heaven; O what then must be my Punishment, if I heap upon the guilt of Injustice and Uncharitableness, many others, namely, the Guilt of Ingratitude, Unfaithfulness, Lying, Perjury. O preserve me therefore, O my God, from all Falshood and Wrong; suffer me not to forfeit thy Favour, and destroy my Soul, for the sake of those things which perish. O let me be fully convinc'd, that the ways of Righteousness are ways of Pleasantness, and that all her Paths are Prosperity and Peace, that so I may delight my self in the Law of my God, and may find Comfort and a Blessing in the discharge of my Duty: Teach me, O Lord, Humility and Obedience, Faith and Truth, Care and Industry, Charity and Meekness, that I may adorn the Doctrine of God my Saviour, win others over to a Love of Vertue; and after an humble and contented, tho' laborious Life here, may enter into Rest and Glory hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



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